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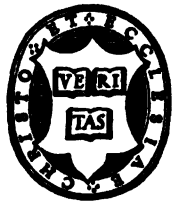

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MEMOIRS

OF

THE WHIG PARTY

DURING MY TIME.

BY

HENRY RICHARD LORD HOLLAND.

EDITED BY HIS SON,

HENRY EDWARD LORD HOLLAND.

VOL I.

LONDON:
LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, AND LONGMANS.
1852.

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Holland House,
August 2nd, 1851.

DEAR LORD LANSDOWNE,

FOR various reasons which must be obvious to you, I feel anxious to publish some part of my Father's more serious and important writings. The Foreign Reminiscences were originally intended by him as a mere supplementary chapter to his Memoirs, and perhaps in coming out alone they exposed him to criticisms from which his universal benevolence might have saved him. I may perhaps have erred in publishing them without what was meant to precede, but the interest felt at the time for Continental politics, and especially for the name of Napoleon, led me to think the moment favourable for their appearance.

The following pages contain the first volume of a work which my Father com-

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menced in early life, and carefully carried on for some few years. I have omitted three or four passages of no great importance, and I need not add that I, of course, have made no change whatever in the text.

In placing these pages under the sanction of your name, I feel that I am doing what my Father would have wished, and what, from your invariable kindness, is most gratifying to

Your obliged and affectionate Cousin,

HOLLAND.

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N.B.—The First Book was written before the year 1802. The Second Book between May, 1805, and the 1st of January, 1812. I alter the style, and here and there add illustrations of the characters in transcribing it, but the main facts are related as I originally wrote them; and I mention the date of my writing them, because the knowledge of the time at which a MS. was written is not unfrequently as necessary to ascertain historical truth as the preservation of it.

1824. V. HOLLAND.

Libro hoc habes, ne sperne, quod restat mei.

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MEMOIRS

OF

THE WHIG PARTY

DURING MY TIME.

BOOK THE FIRST.

1800.

It was long before I prevailed upon myself to engage in the present undertaking. It would be gross vanity to fancy the transactions of my life of any great importance. Yet when I reflect that many listen with pleasure to the most trifling anecdotes of past times; that I have had the advantage of knowing some of the best and wisest men of my age and country;

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and that the habit of recording such events as have hitherto occurred in my public life would secure my preserving some account of more important transactions, should it be my fate ever to act a part in them, I flatter myself that these notes may possibly be interesting to others, and I console myself with thinking that they must be entertaining, and perhaps useful, to myself. They will serve as a criterion by which to estimate the stability of my opinions and the soundness of my judgment; they may tend to fix my principles by forcing me to examine them; they may furnish me with the means of repelling slander by preserving the grounds by which my actions are regulated; and they will, at least, refresh my memory, and bring many anecdotes and characters to my recollection, if I live to be old. As the perusal of these pages will, in all probability, be confined during my life to the writer of them or to his nearest relations and dearest friends, I have no great reason to dread the severity of criticism, and I

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am too indolent voluntarily to impose on myself much attention to style, or even to method. I shall write down what has come to my knowledge respecting publick events and publick characters, and is not to be found in Annual Registers or other histories of the day, with little or no regard to the manner of relating it.

My education resembled that of most young men of my rank, and though both a minor and an orphan, and treated with the tenderness of parents by my uncles, I was not spoilt by indulgence. I went through Eton and Oxford without disgrace and without distinction, and I travelled through Scotland and Switzerland and France with a clergyman (Mr. Morris); through Denmark, Germany, Spain, and Italy, either alone or with companions of my own age. My uncle, Mr. Fox, whose transcendent genius was admired, even by enemies, and whose frank and generous nature gained all who approached him, was the leader of Opposition during my minority. I was, no doubt, swayed by

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my affection for him, as well as convinced by his arguments, to espouse the principles which have generally guided the popular party in this country called Whigs. He seemed to take pleasure in awakening my ambition, and directing it, both by conversation and correspondence, and yet more by talking to me of my studies and inspiring me with a love of poetry, both ancient and modern. He enforced this taste full as much by example as by precept. His love, or rather his passion for poetry, embracing all branches of it from love songs to Homer, was the never-failing source of unaffected delight to him in business and in retirement, in adversity and in prosperity, in health and in sickness.

Mr. Burke's intemperate view of the French Revolution is well known. Its effect on the political party to which he belonged, and of which the Duke of Portland and Mr. Fox were the leaders, was to dissolve that connexion, and ultimately to unite the Duke of Portland and his immediate friends or followers, with the Ad-

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ministration which they had, in conjunction with Mr. Fox, for nearly ten years opposed. I had only a school boy's acquaintance with Mr. Burke. It is not for me to correct or to reconcile the contradictory opinions, entertained by his partisans and his enemies, of his views and conduct at that period. Till the ecclesiastical revenues were suppressed, Burke was far from disapproving the French Revolution. But what conclusion, against the sincerity of his opinions, is to be drawn from the fact? An extravagant veneration for all established rites and ceremonies in religion appears to have been a sentiment long and deeply rooted in his mind. It arose, indeed, from a conviction of the necessity of some establishment to the preservation of society, and the necessity of some outward show and pomp to the maintenance of that establishment, rather than from any strong predilection for particular tenets. Mr. Fox has more than once assured me, that in his invectives against Mr. Hastings' indignities to the Indian Priest-

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hood, he spoke of the piety of the Hindoos with admiration, and of their holy religion and sacred functions with an awe bordering on devotion. The seizure of the property of the Clergy, in France, might then excite alarm in breasts less predisposed to sensibility on such subjects. It was, in the judgment of many, an outrageous violation of property; when, therefore, it professed to be the result of a philosophy which denied the usefulness of all ecclesiastical institutions, rather than the desperate resource of an exhausted exchequer, it suggested a train of apprehensions in the mind of Mr. Burke, who, from the habitual tenor of his opinions, was prepared to receive such impressions. He was, too, as rational friends of liberty are apt to be, a supporter of Aristocracy, in the favourable sense of that word. But from intimacy with some of the most amiable members of it, and from the long habit of defending them, he had grown somewhat superstitiously attached to the shape which it has assumed in our Constitution; and from temper he had

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learnt to pay an absurd degree of reverence to those appendages, or rather abuses, for which the general benefits of the system may offer some atonement, but which nothing but prejudice or adulation can seriously regard as beauties in the system itself. He loved to exaggerate everything: when exasperated by the slightest opposition, even on accidental topicks of conversation, he always pushed his principles, his opinions, or even impressions of the moment, to the extreme. A ludicrous instance may illustrate this peculiarity. When recommending spermaceti candles (then a new invention) for their cheapness, he somewhat hastily asserted that they were equal in brightness aud other qualities to the best wax tapers; but when contradicted, he maintained, with earnestness and even with vehemence, that they were infinitely better. With all the extent of knowledge, and all the depth of thought, which he could apply to more important subjects, he was on them, as in trifles, equally peremptory, extravagant, impetuous, and overbearing. His

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principles led him to condemn the French Revolution, his temper to discard all candour and moderation in speaking of those who promoted or approved of it. Accidental circumstances conspired with his natural violence to direct his alarms at its progress to his own country, and to convert what at first appeared a speculative censure of a foreign event into distrust and suspicion of those with whom he had hitherto acted. It was not long before he charged many of them with disaffection, and united himself, and some few who followed him, with those whom he and they had constantly opposed. He shortly afterwards made up his mind to the necessity of involving the Governments of England and of the rest of Europe in a war of aggression against France, and of extermination against those principles of resistance which he had frequently and warmly defended, to which our Constitution owes its stability, if not its origin, and on the acknowledgment of which all free Governments whatever must ultimately depend.

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His son was sincerely attached to his father. It was his only virtue. He had every quality that could render him disagreeable to other persons, and no great talents to counterbalance them. Hence he was disliked and neglected by the members of Opposition. But the affection of a child naturally blinds a parent to his failings, and Burke saw none in his son. They both ascribed the neglect of the son, which was the natural consequence of his own disagreeable qualities, to a fixed estrangement from the father. Accidental sarcasms of Sheridan, who never liked Burke, Erskine's defence of Stockdale, in which he inveighed with more than his usual eloquence against the prosecution of Mr. Hastings, and perhaps some slackness in that prosecution on the part of Grey and others, confirmed him in suspicions which the treatment of young Burke had created, and which his complaints of it studiously and constantly fomented. Burke was hurt at the little value set upon his son; his son was offended at what appeared to him a relaxation of

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the homage due to his father. Good feeling sometimes begets bad conduct. Burke's ill-humour broke out on the first mention of the French Revolution in the House of Commons by Sheridan. It was stifled, but not extinguished, by the temper and moderation of Mr. Fox; but it blazed out afterwards, on the question of the Canada Bill in a way that made it manifest to friends and foes, and though it grieved one and in some senses gratified the other, was acknowledged by both to be unfeeling and disgusting. I was present at that painful scene*: to me Burke appeared all fury and unreasonableness; but, perhaps, I was too young to be a competent judge, and too affectionately attached to Mr. Fox to be an impartial one. More than one person present, however, whose partialities, at least political partialities, leant to Burke, assured me that they were touched by the tenderness and affection of Mr. Fox to

* I was also present. Dudley North called it fine acting.—R. A.

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an old friend, and hurt and disgusted by the coarseness and virulence of Mr. Burke. Nothing can be more false than the account of that memorable debate in Prior's life of Burke. Mr. Pitt, himself, I have been told, praised Mr. Fox's temper, and censured Mr. Burke's want of it on that occasion.

Burke from that time had no intercourse with the Whigs, but for the purpose of disuniting them. "It is hard," said Sheridan on some occasion in 1793, "that he whom we had drummed out of the regiment as a deserter, should be lurking within our lines as a spy."* Mischievous as his conduct was, I acquit him of dishonesty. He had, indeed, little of that noble pride or dignified affectation which disdains to reap all the fruits in private advantage, to which public opinions and connexions might help, or services entitle; but the hope of such advantage did not bias his opinions or his actions. He would, perhaps, have judged

* Sheridan did much in widening the breach. Burke not a "deserter."—R. A.

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better for his fame, had he accepted no pension; but though that pension was the reward of his conduct, his conduct, I am convinced, was not actuated by the hope of attaining it. If his gratitude somewhat softened, it did not entirely suppress his subsequent disapprobation of those from whom he had accepted it. On the whole, if greatness consists in comprehension of mind and fertility of genius, rather than in wisdom of design and judgment in action,—and if by goodness we mean rectitude of intention and disinterestedness of conduct, rather than justice, affection, or moderation,— Burke may pass for a great and a good man. His chief defect was an imperious and uncontrollable temper. This disfigured his manners, clouded his judgment, and sometimes corrupted his heart; yet none could sacrifice more to publick honour and private friendship. Mr. Fox always spoke with admiration and sometimes with gratitude of the cheerfulness with which he submitted to be outgrown in favour and importance with the Rockingham connexion, by one whom he

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had transplanted young among the Whigs, and nurtured afterwards in the principles of the party. Examine his motives, he might pass for a patriot; look to his opinions, and, with all his powers, he was almost a bigot. It was the policy of Mr. Pitt to foment in the Whig party the divisions which Burke had produced. He pursued that policy with some dexterity*; perhaps he adapted his measures, even with respect to foreign relations, in some measure to that view. The impetuosity of Mr. Grey, wrought upon by the restless activity of Lord Lauderdale†, and the ambition of some of his younger friends, viz., Mr. Whitbread, Mr. Lambton, and Mr. Tierney, gave a handle for Ministers to raise the alarm of Revolution. They had formed an Association for Parliamentary Reform called *the Friends of the People*. It was originally founded, I believe, without the knowledge, certainly without the sanction, of Mr. Fox,

* Quadrumanous activity, as Burke called it, comparing it to the mischief of a monkey. — R. A.

† Mr. Fox assured me of this. — R. A.

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who never was a member of it. It originated in a conversation, after dinner, at Lord Portchester's, who was very active in promoting it while under discussion, but who, when Mr. Francis brought pen, ink, and paper, to reduce the resolutions to writing, declined adding his signature, observing that they would not be *republican* enough for him.

In a few months he publicly arraigned it as seditious, and obtained the Earldom of Carnarvon; on which Mr. Fox pleasantly observed, that he was right in saying that the Association was not so Republican as he wished, for, if it had been, he would probably have got a Marquisate. This conduct was not very honourable nor very wise; yet was the first Lord Carnarvon generally a sensible and sincere man, a friend of constitutional freedom, and though perhaps too eager a disputant, neither unuseful in publick, nor disagreeable in private life. Many persons of weight and consideration in the Country, though connected with Op-

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position, loudly and vehemently condemned this Association; some who afterwards steadily adhered to Mr. Fox in his opposition to the war, such as the Duke of Bedford and Lord Derby, secretly lamented or openly disapproved of it. None of Mr. Fox's immediate and personal friends (Fitzpatrick, Hare, or Lord Robert Spencer) ever belonged to it. A Proclamation was issued in the summer of 1792. Its avowed object was to discourage and suppress seditious writings and democratical conspiracies, but its real intention was, by sounding the alarm of Revolution, to separate the party of the Whigs, (which had recently appeared more formidable in numbers than ever on the divisions upon the Russian war,) and to call forth the opinions of those who were averse to the agitation of Reform at such a moment. It had been previously communicated to the Duke of Portland. He called a meeting of Whigs at Burlington House, for the form of consulting them upon the propriety of sup-

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porting it, but, being virtually pledged to the measure, he purposely omitted inviting Mr. Fox to the consultation.

The Duke of Bedford, on hearing that Mr. Fox was not likely to come, drily observed, "Then I am sure I have nothing to do here," and left the room. George Lord North, who stayed, was probably not very cordial; for in coldly approving the measure in the House of Commons, he almost in terms declared that it was the last and only occasion on which he could bring himself to vote against Mr. Fox. But the measure had its desired effect. The party were publickly divided in Parliament. Among the most strenuous supporters of the ministerial measure was Mr. Windham of Norfolk. On the first publication of Mr. Burke's Pamphlet, he condemned the principles and ridiculed the performance with full as much freedom as the laws of long friendship could admit. He had, too, been a warm admirer of the French Revolution at its commencement. He had even

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urged Mr. Fox to come over to France, "as it was right such glorious scenes should have the sanction of an eminent Englishman attached to the principles of liberty." In the autumn, however, of 1791, when I saw much of him at Paris, this ardour had abated, though an excessive horror of the principles which he had so fervently approved had not as yet succeeded to it in his mind. He was wavering and irresolute, but full of ingenious parallels and contrasts on the subject. We supped every night together, in company with Talleyrand, at a French lady's apartments in the Louvre. Mr. Windham was perpetually employed in stating the various and opposite conclusions which a contemplation of the Bishop of Autun's character, conduct, and history might suggest to a person anxious to make up his mind on the French Revolution. "He is (he would observe) a two-edged knife, — he cuts both ways. So dissolute*, profligate an instrument augured

* By profligacy Mr. W. no doubt meant fashionable dissipation. Talleyrand, even when a bishop,

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ill of the morality by which this regeneration of a government was to be effected; but then what was that system in which this same profligate man was a bishop?" The remark elucidates the wavering state of Mr. Windham's mind at the time, and shews the opinion entertained even then of Talleyrand, who has acted so distinguished a part in the affairs of Europe. He was soon afterwards appointed nominally a counsellor, substantially a director, to Chauvelin, the French ambassador in London. Chauvelin, with wit and talent, was very young and inexperienced, and as vain as most of his countrymen: he disliked the notion, and yet more the appearance, of a Mentor. The jealousy of the one, and the interference of the other, led to Talleyrand's return to Paris in the summer of 1792, from whence he escaped, after the 10th of August,

was certainly neither austere nor strait-laced, but in his case, as in that of all men of his great talents and rank who are inattentive to the opinion of the world, weaknesses, indulgences, and foibles have been swelled into vices and profligacy by exaggeration.

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with great difficulty, by favour of a passport from Danton, which, at a subsequent period, rescued him from the imputation and consequences of emigration. I found him and Mr. Windham, on my return to England in December, as constant as they had been at Paris in their evening visits to Madame de F——, who, by the assistance of Lord Wycombe and Mr. Robert Smith, had escaped through the populace with her novel of Adele de Solanges in MS. under her arm, and received every evening in her little lodgings in Half-moon Street, nearly the same society as she had been accustomed to entertain at the Louvre the year before. Talleyrand was then quite separated from Chauvelin. It was reported that Talleyrand urged him to espouse the King's cause, and to declare his mission at an end, and that he had refused to do so. Yet, when General Lafayette first declared against the Jacobins, and it was expected that he would march his army to Paris and rescue the King, Chauvelin, with great emotion, and strutting across the room with strong ges-

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ticulations, declared that he, as his ambassador, should be the chief instrument in restoring the King; that he would immediately draw up and present a memorial to the English Government, declaratory of the termination of his mission and the illegality of the Government at Paris. D'André warned him of the consequences: "If," said he, "the King is restored by others, the step you are taking will no doubt gain you credit and favour, and entitle you to reward; but if the Republicans triumph, you are an emigrant and a traitor." Chauvelin would not listen, though the advice came from a man hitherto more suspected of Royalism than himself: he presented the paper—news soon arrived of General Lafayette's flight, and the triumph of the more violent parties. Chauvelin was in despair. In an interview with Lord Grenville, he condescended to solicit the restoration of his paper; and Lord Grenville not only returned it, but had the generosity and temper to suppress the anecdote, when the subsequent conduct of Chauvelin was by no

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means calculated to ensure any great forbearance or delicacy from him. Long ere this, the doubts of Mr. Windham were dispelled, and it should seem almost forgotten by him. He now condemned not only the French Revolution, but everything which sounded like liberty or reform: he ridiculed the humanity of abolishing the Slave-trade, though he had been among the most passionate declaimers against that barbarous traffic. He courted, and was courted by the University of Oxford, yet a year before he had denominated it the Metropolis of Toryism, ignorance and prejudice, — he sighed for the restoration of the Priesthood, the nobility and absolute Monarchy in France, and he was among the foremost to plunge the country in war for that most unwarrantable object.

I spent the autumn and part of the winter of 1792 in Denmark and in the northern parts of Germany. Never were four months more productive of extraordinary events. In France the Ministry had been changed, the country invaded, the invaders

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compelled to retreat, the King's veto given, his guards defeated by the people, himself imprisoned and deposed; the Convention called, the Republick declared, the Austrians routed, Flanders overrun, Holland threatened, and all those glories tarnished by the excesses of the populace, the connivance or weakness of the Government, and the increasing strength of the faction of Jacobins.

In England, the party of the Opposition had been divided, Lord Gower, our ambassador, recalled from Paris, the Parliament suddenly assembled, the militia as suddenly called out, and a general ferment occasioned by these measures, by the events in France, and by the language of Ministers and their adherents. Everything announced the approach of hostilities between France and England, and political passions and alarms diffused over society a degree of violence, hatred, and suspicion, such as I never witnessed before or since, and hope, in this country, never to see again. Some endeavours were, however, made to keep the Whigs together. The Duke of Port-

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land gave every man who spoke to him some hopes that it was practicable, for every man who spoke to him went away with the opinion that he agreed with him. Lord Fitzwilliam and Mr. Windham were the most averse to any accommodation, or, at least, the most explicit in avowing their sense of its impracticability. Before this time, Mr. Pitt, foreseeing the accession of great names to his administration, had taken occasion to dismiss his Chancellor, Lord Thurlow, who was always inconvenient, and had lately been troublesome. He had thus the seals to offer, and Lord Loughborough (formerly Wedderburn, afterwards Rosslyn) never had the hypocrisy of professing the virtue to resist them. The Duke of Portland affected some indignation at his accepting them. In an interview of an hour, in which the Chancellor was at great pains to explain his motives, his Grace never uttered a word, and when Lord Loughborough, with the door in his hand, said, "Then I am to understand that your Grace disapproves of

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this step," he answered drily, "Most certainly." It was not long before the Duke followed his example, and submitted to humiliations infinitely more disgraceful than any to which Lord Loughborough was exposed. With the latter, Lord Stormont, Lord Carlisle, and Sir Gilbert Elliot, and other adherents of Lord North's administration, fell off. With the exception of his son, and Mr. Adam*, there was scarce a follower of that Minister (then Lord Guildford, and dying) who remained in the Opposition. Sir Gilbert Elliot did worse. Though he knew that Lord Tichfield was in the House of Commons with a speech in his hat, or in his pocket, written by his father, he chose to anticipate it, and to deliver what he termed the sentiments of that Duke on the unavoidable dissolution of the party. This widened the breach, and to Mr. Fox, who was all warmth and affection in friendship, was a cruel blow. To those, however, who were attached to him, and who had long seen that a reconciliation was quite impos-

* And Mr. Courtenay, I think.—R. A.

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sible, it appeared an advantage. It left him to pursue the course which his judgment approved, unfettered by petty considerations and managements which would only have rendered his objects less clear to the world and his efforts to attain them more irksome to himself. The English Government had prohibited the exportation of corn to France. The French had opened the commerce of the Scheldt, and had in very unguarded terms, by a decree dated the 29th of November, offered the assistance of the Republick to all insurgents.

These topicks afforded ample matter for discussion between the two countries; but we had recalled our Ambassador, and by difficulties of form and distinctions about Mr. Chauvelin's character at our Court, and yet more by studiously avoiding, in our complaints of injury and insult, to point out what redress or what reparation would satisfy us, we prevented the possibility of bringing the dispute between the two countries to any amicable conclusion. The publick were deeply affected at the trial

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and execution of Lewis XVI. Lord Grenville immediately dismissed Mr. Chauvelin from London, and the Convention almost as immediately declared war with England and Holland.

The execution of the French King, whether justifiable or not on the grounds of law, or necessity, was an unfortunate event for the tranquillity and happiness of Europe and the world. The circumstances attending the trial, some traits in the character and behaviour of the unfortunate Prince himself, who, although always self-sufficient and occasionally brutal in his manner, was not devoid of benevolence in prosperity, and fortitude in adversity; the leave which he took of his family, and the pathetic will which he left behind him, were all calculated to heighten that pity which fallen greatness seldom fails to excite in generous minds. Men of wisdom and reflection, while they bewailed the sufferings of the individual, foresaw yet deeper causes of sorrow iu the calamities which were the consequences of his fate. I mean

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not to be uncharitable, but I must own, from the best of my observation at the time, the advocates for war seemed to feel more pleased at the hold this event gave them on the passions of the publick, than grieved at the catastrophe itself. Mr. Fox, from a faint hope of saving the King, and from a natural desire of refuting the imputations cast on his own character, gave notice of a motion expressive of the disapprobation felt by the House of the trial then pending in France. As Frenchmen considered him and his party more favourable to them than other Englishmen, he thought a strong censure of their proceedings from a friendly quarter might have some weight. There were difficulties, however, both in form and principle, with respect to any parliamentary proceeding on such a subject; and when many Members had observed that the object, if practicable, was already obtained by the debate, Mr. Fox consented to withdraw it. Enough passed to show, that all parties in the House of Commons deprecated the execution of the

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unfortunate prisoner. Burke, in private, ridiculed this motion of Mr. Fox; he feared it might be successful. He was overheard to say that "there was little use in preserving the carcase of a monarch, when the breath of monarchy was no more." The impression made on the publick by the execution of Lewis XVI. was so deep and so universal, that an Englishman was hardly permitted, in publick or in private, to express any opinion on politicks, without first pronouncing an anathema against the French Convention. A lamentation over the fate of the French King was as common and as necessary an introduction to a pamphlet or a speech, as an overture to an opera, or grace to a dinner. Compassion indeed, for him, and indignation at his persecutors, was natural and respectable. It was not equally wise or just to involve England and the world in a war, from feelings of compassion, however natural and respectable, for individuals who were not under the protection of our laws. But it was a moment of passion, and England has

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paid severely for indulging it. Her Ministers, had they been statesmen, might have found in those events, from which so much calamity, bloodshed, and persecution have flowed, the sources of security, glory, and prosperity for their country, of peace, tranquillity, and good government for mankind. An influence in France, founded on national amity, and a good will towards her new institutions, might at one time have been easily obtained. Such an influence might have modified the principles, and softened the excesses of the French Revolution. It would have secured a general peace, and prevented the necessity of formidable armies in France, which alone furnished the means, and perhaps created the inclination, for conquest and aggrandisement. They, in a short time, threatened every country in Europe with subjugation and destruction. We adopted a cold, distant, and inexplicable line of policy. The consequences were the reverse of what an opposite system would have produced.

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Our moderation was suspected by France. Our interference was dreaded. The views and extent of the confederacy rendered every possible exertion necessary, and when we acceded to it, the persuasion that we availed ourselves of her condition to ruin the commerce, and reduce the importance of our rival, revived all that national animosity, which has been the parent of so many wars, and which aggravated the horrors of the one which ensued.

Yet the war was as popular out of doors as in Parliament, and perhaps even more so. Even there the minority was small. In the Commons 40, and in the Lords only 4. There was, however, in that reduced number a large proportion of talent. Sheridan, the member of the party most obnoxious to the aristocratical branch of the Whigs, seemed to dedicate his wit, ingenuity, and eloquence, with more assiduity than ever, to the service of Mr. Fox, who had repeatedly, and I believe * re-

* Mr. Fox about this time had a very secret interview with Mr. Pitt, in which the latter proposed a coalition

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cently, refused to sacrifice the just pretension of his friend to any views of party accommodation and coalition, or to any popular clamour founded on the immorality of Sheridan's private character. Mr. Grey, too, felt additional attachment to Mr. Fox, and zeal for his party, from an apprehension, suggested by his warm, susceptible, and generous temper, that much of the obloquy cast on the party was founded on measures of which he had been the author, and from gratitude for the noble and unaffected disinterestedness and spirit with which Mr. Fox had vindicated his conduct, and supported him against the aspersions, even of some of his oldest

of parties with many conditions somewhat unpalateable, though not utterly inadmissible, or in the least dishonourable, except the exclusion of men, and particularly of Sheridan, to which Mr. Fox would not listen. I speak somewhat doubtfully in the text, because having heard the subject mentioned at a considerable distance of time by Mr. Fox, Mrs. Fox, and I think Fitzpatrick, and Lord Robert Spencer or Hare, I am not confident that there was not some variation in their recollection of the period at which the interview occurred.

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adherents. These honest and affectionate feelings inflamed his eloquence, gave it that tone of earnestness and decision, which has ever been its characteristick excellence, and raised his reputation to a pitch which it had long deserved, and has since more than maintained. If he brought not wit or imagination equal to Sheridan, he supplied firmness, character, and consideration enough greatly to overbalance all such disparity. From this period he was only the second of Mr. Fox, in the estimation of the party and of the country.

Of the minority in the Lords a more complete account may easily be given. Lord Derby, an early and steady friend of Mr. Fox, was a man of great family and fortune, extraordinary good humour and spirits, with great discretion and more talent in debate and in business than in any other situations; but his vanity, though of an inoffensive kind, was greater than his ambition. Lord Lauderdale, of whom I shall often have occasion to speak, was a bold, quick, and sincere man, full of good affections and

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useful acquirements with two slight defects, viz., a restlessness of disposition, and a studied contempt of general opinion. The one, in spite of his disinterested conduct, led strangers to distrust his political integrity, and to attribute his active and friendly exertions to a love of intrigue and selfish designs; the other impressed all persons at that period with a very false notion, that his principles and designs were as extravagant and mischievous as his exertions for his party were active and, perhaps, factious. His attachment to Mr. Fox was invariable; there was no one, with the exception of his earliest friends, whom Mr. Fox more confidentially consulted, or thought more serviceable, in private and in publick life. "I wonder (I have heard him say) how the world went on when there was no Lauderdale to help it, or what will become of it when he leaves it." Lord Stanhope (the third earl of that title), who had till very recently been a bitter opponent of the Coalition and of Mr. Fox, and was brother-

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in-law to Mr. Pitt, was one of the "true old enthusiastic breed." His fanaticism was, indeed, so far adapted to modern times, that it was chiefly confined to political objects, and not founded exclusively on religion; he possessed great command of temper and profound knowledge of science; understood thoroughly the forms of Parliament; and though not a professional man, had read much law, and was familiar with the practice of our Courts and the rules of our jurisprudence. His constitutional learning was both accurate and extensive. He was not very scrupulous, either in argument or conduct, about the means of rendering others subservient to his designs; but those designs were never to promote his private advantage. They were, in his judgment, beneficial to his fellow citizens and useful to mankind. In his ardent pursuit of impracticable schemes, he was actuated neither by ambition nor avarice, nor pride nor resentment, and as little by more amiable affections. If we except his mother, and a

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certain pious regard for the memory of his father, he seemed to care little for anybody.

As a speaker, he was full of matter, ingenious and subtle, and very perspicuous both in language and arrangement. Inelegant and coarse, even to buffoonery and scurrility, in his illustrations and invectives, ungraceful and grotesque in his gesticulations and delivery, but yet not deficient in vigour, spirit, and effect. His speeches, however, were neither persuasive nor judicious; he never adapted his views to the opinions of the time, the state of parties, or the temper of his audience. It was more difficult to answer, than easy to agree with him. His logick was close, subtle, and scholastick, but neither practical nor convincing, and his conclusions, though to appearance clearly deduced, were often manifestly absurd and to all practical purposes unintelligible. He was in some senses of the word the truest Jacobin I have ever known; he not only deemed monarchy, a clergy, and a nobility, but

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property, or at least landed property by descent, unlawful abuses. He more than once complimented me by telling me in a whisper, that he thought me more mischievous than people imagined, and he sometimes gave me a glimpse of his designs in proposing measures apparently preposterous, by hinting their tendency to subvert the fundamental principles of society, or by laughing immoderately when such was suggested to be the probable effect of them. He inherited through father and mother a strong attachment to freedom. His education at Geneva, his habits, his pursuits, all tended to confirm it; and on every question affecting the principles of popular government, he uniformly and strenuously stood forth the champion of the people and the enemy of power.

I am afraid that in his private character he was less praiseworthy, he was certainly less amiable; he was a bad husband, an unkind, perhaps an unjust, father; yet he exacted nothing from his children that he had not himself been willing to render to his own

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parents; he was, as his principles required, an easy landlord and an indulgent master, an obedient and affectionate son, and on many occasions an active, friendly, and generous promoter of the arts and sciences; in many of them, especially mechanicks, he was himself a great proficient. He was the first, or at least among the first, who suggested that wonderful improvement, the application of steam to the purposes of navigation. With his usual perverseness of ingenuity, he built a vessel in 1792 for conveying coals from Newcastle to London, which would have consumed its cargo before it could have reached its destination. He showed it me, Admiral Blanket, and Lord Wycombe, at Deptford, in that year. By a contradiction still more characteristick of his ingenious but not practical understanding, the steam carriage, which he also invented, (and tried between Calais and Boulogne, somewhere about the year '90 or '91,) ran up hill with extraordinary rapidity, got along with some difficulty on plain ground, but came to a

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dead stop at every descent. His inventions in musick and musical instruments were also ingenious, but not very generally adopted; but his stereotypes are still in use, and an alteration in the printing press devised by him, is considered as the greatest improvement in the art since the discovery of Printing.

On the whole, if a scrupulous regard to truth prevents me from pronouncing my friend and benefactor *, without some qualification, a wise, a good, or an amiable character, none can deny that he was an ingenious, diligent, disinterested, useful, and remarkable man.

Of Lord Lansdowne, (Shelburne,) how shall I speak ? I had too many obligations

* He made me his executor, and left me a share of the residue of all his disposable property. Soon after this legacy, in 1816, I extracted this account of his character from the green morocco book of my Notes, added some observations which I had made on further intimacy with him, and, perhaps, enlarged on many of his good qualities, but neither suppressed anything, nor softened a phrase which my earlier and more impartial view of his conduct and character had suggested.

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to him, and retain too strong a sense of many estimable and some great qualities which he possessed, not to feel a pang in recording his failings. Yet, if I conceal them, I withhold a testimony which I can, with too much sincerity, bear to the truth of those objections to his character which formed in 1783 the chief, perhaps the only, justification of persons yet dearer to me. I allude to the epoch when Mr. Fox, Lord J. Cavendish, and others, refused to form part of an administration of which Lord Lansdowne was the head. He was capable of strong attachments, but he was too suspicious to feel, and too restless in his dealings with public men to inspire, implicit confidence.* His mind was in itself irregular; and a defective education, ill-usage from his family, and early connexion in publick life with men of the most opposite principles, had made it yet more so. He

* There seems to have been, at least, one exception to this censure. His connexion with the famous Dunning was uninterrupted and highly honourable to both parties.

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had no knowledge of the world, but a thorough persuasion of its dishonesty. His observations on publick life were often original and just, and on individual character shrewd, sagacious, and happy. Though he had studied nothing methodically, he had felt strongly, and thought deeply and intensely on many things. I have known few men whose maxims recur more frequently to my recollection, or are more applicable to the events of the world, and to the characters of those who rule it. Though there was, perhaps, not much candour or justice, there was yet elevation in his character, and I have observed traits of real magnanimity in his conduct. Title or emolument, without power or fame, never were his objects—he would have despised them; for though he looked upon the political world as a mere theatre or show, he meant to act a magnificent and dazzling part in the representation. Power he loved in practice, and admired in theory. The checks devised for the protection of freedom, he, in his heart, lamented as obstacles

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to the administration of the State. Yet his disgust at the Court, and his long habits of Opposition, together with his natural talents for publick speaking, rendered him often serviceable to the popular cause.* Indeed, he was, from conviction, sincerely averse to all commercial restraints and all religious intolerance. In his publick speeches he wanted method and perspicuity, and was deficient in justness of reasoning, in judgment, and in taste; but he had some imagination, some wit, great animation, and both in sarcasm and invective not unfrequently rose to eloquence. His mind seemed to be full and overflowing, and though his language was incorrect and confused, it was often fanciful, original, and happy. There was a force and character, if there was not real genius, in his oratory. If he did not convince the impartial, or confirm the wavering, he generally gratified his own party, and always provoked his adversaries. He exposed himself, awkwardly enough, both

* Bentham always said that "he was the only minister he ever heard of who did not fear the people."

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to refutation and to ridicule; but then he could repel all such attacks with great spirit and readiness. He was a great master of irony, and no man ever expressed bitter scorn for his opponents with more art or effect. His speeches were not only animated and entertaining, but embittered the contest, and enlivened the whole debate.

His chief merits were courage, decision of character, and discernment in discovering the talents of inferiors. Want of judgment was his great defect. An imperious temper and suspicion, with its consequences, his ruling vices. Let me add that in private he was munificent and friendly even to a fault; that none of his family or connexions were ever involved in any difficulty without finding in him a powerful protector and active friend; that his affections were strong, and, if not always steady, at least more lasting than his enmities; that he was a generous master, a hospitable man, and a parent with no other fault than that of excessive fondness and over anxiety for his children. Lord Lansdowne never liked

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nor admired Mr. Fox. As he felt great resentment against Mr. Pitt for leaving him out at the formation of his Ministry, and had even hesitated about receiving the marquisate, which, at the instigation of the Duke of Rutland, Mr. Pitt and the Court had tendered to him as a mark of approbation of the peace, nothing but mutual estrangement between him and the Whigs prevented his taking an active part in opposition to the Administration. He had indeed lately, on the Spanish and Russian armaments, loudly and severely arraigned their measures. In the autumn of 1792, his son, Lord Wycombe, opened the Opposition in Parliament, by deprecating the alarm so studiously expressed at speculative opinions, and censuring in strong and eloquent language the injustice as well as impolicy of attempting to suppress them by statutes or by force. Mr. Pitt treated him with much insolence and scorn; and that circumstance, and the approach of war, confirmed Lord Lansdowne in Opposition. I cannot decide whether Mr. Fox's warm

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approbation of Lord Wycombe's sensible speech, and his defence of him when attacked by Mr. Pitt with a fury little creditable to his head or heart, had the effect of inclining Lord Lansdowne to a union with Mr. Fox, or of estranging his suspicious temper more from such a measure. He had many conversations with Mr. Grey, with whose father he was much connected, and with me, then a boy of nineteen, on the subject. What passed with Grey I know not. I told him that their common disapprobation of the war, and of the system, both domestick and foreign, adopted by Ministers, would insensibly draw them more cordially together than any understanding or treaty at so early a period. I added that Mr. Fox had been so long politically connected and was so personally attached to, many of those leading men with whom he now differed, that publick duty, appearance to the world, and, above all, his own affectionate feelings, would indispose him to seek any new connexions, or to break through his old engagements, till those with whom he had formed

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them acknowledged that it was impracticable to preserve them with mutual honour. But as the objects of Lord Lansdowne and of Mr. Fox were peace and reform to a greater or less extent, I thought that in the pursuit of those objects they must ultimately meet and assist each other. I perceived there was not much reliance on either side on the others' professions or intentions, and I let both see that I thought so. I was diverted at observing that Lord Lansdowne throughout attributed the backwardness of the Whigs to Mr. Fox's jealousy of him, whereas Mr. Fox was, of the whole party, (with the exception of Mr. Grey) the least disinclined to him, and the others had not only a distrust, but an unwarrantable hatred, of his very name.

I was not a little flattered at being made the channel of a political negotiation, and, to confess the truth, somewhat vain at my conduct in it, which was to the full as prudent as could be expected in a lad of nineteen; inasmuch as I was not blinded by my wishes, and never softened or suppressed

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a sentiment of either party for the sake of procuring an apparent concert between them, which, if it had been found only temporary and fallacious, must have ended in the revival and aggravation of all their former resentments. My other relations very wisely judged that I was entering upon life too soon, and exerted themselves to hurry me abroad. I sailed for Spain in the Juno frigate, Captain Hood (afterwards Sir Samuel), with Admiral Gravina and Captain Valdez, on March 30th, 1793. During the three years I spent abroad in Spain and Italy, I knew little of English politicks but what newspapers informed me of and annual registers have in all probability preserved. My uncle, indeed, wrote to me regularly, and extracts from his letters, if they convey no other information, will serve to show his unaffected wisdom and foresight, the excellence of his heart, and the ardour and sincerity of his zeal in the cause of liberty. I had few opportunities of learning much about the politicks of the countries which I visited, and I gave

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myself little trouble to improve them, till I was joined by Lord Wycombe at Florence in the autumn of 1794.

The Court of Spain was the only Court of Europe that took any publick and conciliatory step to save Lewis the XVI. from the guillotine. Her Ministers at Paris presented a memorial to the Convention, but that Assembly passed to the order of the day. It is, however, remarkable that Charles IV. of Spain, notwithstanding his rank and his family connexion, felt personally but little compassion for Lewis XVI. That unfortunate but vain Prince (for why are his misfortunes to obliterate his faults?) always spoke with contempt of the other Crowned Heads of Europe; and had not only spoken disrespectfully of his cousin of Spain, but slighted him in points of etiquette, which the rulers of mankind generally consider as matters of the greatest importance. In defiance of usage and courtesy, he refused to compliment him on his accession, or even to answer his letters in his own hand; and he assigned as his reason

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for this slight, the despicable talents of Charles, saying, "Bah! c'est une bête: il est gouverné par sa femme." The expression was repeated to the King of Spain, and he, on learning the deposal and execution of Lewis XVI., reminded his courtiers, ungenerously enough, of this insolent speech, and added, with some exultation, that his French cousin's superior wisdom had not enabled him to preserve his own crown. The representations of England, the excesses at Paris, and above all the state of the Ministerial and Court factions at Madrid, soon involved Spain in the war. The only obstacle to Godoy's (afterwards Prince of Peace, then Duke of Akudia) rapid advancement was the Count d' Aranda, an Arragonese nobleman of some experience and more reputation for sagacity than perhaps he deserved. He had distinguished self as an enemy to the Jesuits, and a friend to the connexion with France. With the prejudices of an old man, he clung to the political system of his youth, and perhaps with some little desire to retain the po-

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pularity which French writers had bestowed upon him, he was sincerely and even intemperately anxious to preserve peace with the Republick. The Queen was desirous to procure his dismissal to make way for Godoy, and his contemptuous treatment of that young man, when introduced into the Council, determined both her and her lover on his downfall. They therefore urged the war, and D' Aranda, who opposed it, was civilly dismissed. Spain, when allied with France against England, had much improved her navy; and now she was allied with England against France, though the danger was in another quarter, directed her defence to the same point. Her fleets were rapidly equipped, but her army was ill officered, ill disciplined, ill clothed, ill paid, and ill provided for. Numberless Frenchmen (especially Poitevins), who in various towns of Spain discharged the menial offices of porters, watercarriers, and servants, were expelled on the declaration of war. Great inconveniences to Spaniards resulted from this measure, and the poor

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wretches themselves, having on their entrance into France refused to take the oaths enjoined by law, or to enlist in the revolutionary army, were conducted without mercy to the guillotine or the fusillades. I met many in Navarre, hastening to their doom, counting their beads on the road, and calling down vengeance on the Conventionalists of France, against whom the bigoted priests of Spain had taught them to entertain an abhorrence, but to whose vengeance and persecution they abandoned them without remorse. In many towns, and especially in Valencia, the people instigated by national antipathy and the hopes of pillage, rose upon the French merchants and tradesmen, murdered some, and insulted all: when some of the friars came forward to appease these riots, the populace seized their crucifixes, and beat them off with the very instruments with which they had hoped to allay their fury. I heard this circumstance frequently remarked in Spain, by persons who had known the country long, and thought it

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proved a great change in the manners and feelings of the inhabitants, and an extraordinary decline of the influence of priests and monks over the people.

On the 1st of January, 1794, I sailed from Gibraltar for Toulon, in the St. George, a ship of 98 guns, commanded by Captain (afterwards Admiral) Sir Thomas Foley. We learnt at sea that the French had retaken that town. Of the transactions at Toulon, while in the occupation of the Allies, I have heard many, but contradictory accounts. In one point, however, they all agree, that they were of a nature which no Englishman could have much pleasure in recording, and which it is to be hoped are buried in oblivion. General O'Hara quarrelled with Lord Hood, the Spaniards with both, and the French Royalists with all three: and when, from the consequences of these dissensions and other mismanagements, the Allies were compelled to evacuate the place, all was confusion; no rational orders were given for saving or destroying the French ships, dock-yards,

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and stores; and Sir Sidney Smith, who in fact did *all that was done*, represented what he had done, as so much more than it was, that it threw ridicule, as well as discredit, on the whole. It was at this siege, that a young man named Napoleon Bonaparte, destined to act so great a part on the theatre of the world, first distinguished himself in the field; and his first encounter with English troops, and first acquaintance with English councils and conduct, were not calculated to give him a favourable impression of the enemies whom he was to contend with. This was the period in which the Allies, and the English in particular, allowed themselves to interfere in the most flagrant manner with the rights of neutral and independent, though weak nations. Mr. Drake's conduct at Genoa, and Lord Hervey's at Florence, were afterwards equalled, and perhaps exceeded, by the French, in their violation of neutral territory and neutral rights; but they set the example, and ought to have been more severely reprobated.

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Among many unjustifiable measures in beating up for recruits in the crusade against republicks, the following, more ludicrous than reprehensible, occurred:— Lord Hood had despatched Commodore Linzie, with a line-of-battle ship and two frigates, to Tunis or Tripoli (I forget which), to complain of some alleged partiality of the Bey to the French flag; and he was instructed at the same time to exhort that African Prince to take up arms against the French Republick, in the cause of social order and regular government, in which it was urged that the Barbary States had as deep an interest as the other belligerents. The Commodore, though no great orator, had the topicks of the day at hand, and enlarged on the cruel murder of the King of France, and the measures both of revenge and precaution, in which every legitimate Prince, and the Bey as one, was bound in policy, as well as justice, to co-operate. The Bey listened with great attention, while this exhortation to war was interpreted to him. But when it was concluded, he lifted

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up his turban, and showing with great gesticulation a deep scar on the back of his head, which it had concealed, informed the naval negotiators that he had received that wound some seven years ago, in the course of an insurrection which had driven him to the desert for some months, and that he had never heard of the efforts made either by the King of France, whose fall they now deplored, or by their master, the King of England, who now pressed him to join in a common cause of sovereigns, to reinstate him in the power of which rebellious subjects had deprived him. This practical eloquence was too forcible for the diplomatick seamen's oratory to refute, and they withdrew, somewhat disconcerted at the failure of their representations. Captain Woodley, who commanded the Commodore's ship, and was soon afterwards lost in the North Seas, a lively man and active officer, gave me the account of this mission at Leghorn, where I arrived at the end of January, and lived for some days, chiefly in the society of our naval officers, among

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whom was Nelson, then rising to distinction, for his indefatigable activity, bravery, and zeal. I travelled with Lord Granville Leveson (afterwards Lord Granville) through Florence and Rome, to Naples, where the society, though agreeable, was chiefly English; for the suspicious policy of the Court, under the guidance of the Queen and General Acton, had thinned the ranks of Neapolitan nobility, and peopled the prisons with those of their subjects most eminent for birth, manners, or acquirements. The Queen was at that time very actively employed in screening D'Armfeldt, a Swede, from the justice or vengeance, I know not which, of his Court. The means to which his protectress resorted did not certainly prepossess one in favour of his cause. She employed some money and more intrigue, but above all perjury, which was to be purchased wholesale at Naples, in his defence.

I remained two years at Florence. Lord Wycombe was living with me the greatest part of that time, and his activity procured

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for me much information on the state of Italy and Europe, which enabled me to communicate some intelligence to Mr. Fox. He often assured me it was useful, and he above once made use of the facts I conveyed to him in his speeches in Parliament. Lord Hervey had personally insulted the Grand Duke of Tuscany, and it was generally supposed, in the *maldicente* city of Florence, that resentment at the French Minister for having supplanted him in the good graces of a lady quickened his hatred of the French Republick, or at least gave it the turn of insisting on the dismissal of his rival. The note circulated at Florence as Lord Hervey's was indeed called "a forgery" by Mr. Canning in the House of Commons. I have not investigated the fact since, but my memory is strangely defective, if I had not the best possible testimony to the authenticity of that paper. At any rate, Lord Hervey's conduct was intemperate, indecorous, and violent in the extreme; for either by these offensive notes, or in a personal audience with the Grand Duke, on

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which he insisted in violation of etiquette, he intimidated that Prince into a dismissal of La Flotte, and a breach of that neutrality which had been recognised and approved of by Great Britain herself, and which his brother the Emperor of Germany wished him, even at that period, strictly to adhere to. No minister at the court of Florence but the Russian agent co-operated with Lord Hervey in this measure. Lord Hervey was indeed recalled, but he was not disavowed. It was expected that some man of experience and conciliatory manners would have been selected as his successor; but Mr. W. Wyndham began his career by horsewhipping in the publick drive, through the open windows of a Nuncio's carriage, Mr. Carletti, the chamberlain and favourite of the Grand Duke. This dignified revenge was provoked by that gentleman having questioned the authenticity of news propagated by Mr. Wyndham that we had taken Maubeuge. The affair terminated in a duel. Yet in spite of these sallies of intemperance, Mr. Wyndham was not, as Lord Hervey had

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been, personally obnoxious to the Grand Duke, and his secret and most confidential adviser, Manfredini. They had caught at the imprudence of Lord Hervey to solicit his recall. They winked at the excesses of Mr. Wyndham, from a fear that he might be replaced by a minister who would exert more penetration in detecting, and more address in defeating, the negotiations which they had then renewed with the French Republick. Mr. Wyndham was absorbed in his pleasures, while his old antagonist Carletti, ostensibly banished for the duel, was silently concluding the treaty of peace, and was in reward appointed Minister of Tuscany to Paris. The Court of Tuscany soon afterwards took a mean revenge of Lord Hervey. He had in a quarrel, partly of a private nature, delivered a challenge from a Neapolitan to a subject of Florence. This was made a pretext for banishing him the territory, but the Ministry at home soon gave him a ship, and he died of a fever in his cabin, in the autumn of '95. He had indeed no recommendation but a handsome

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person and a pleasing address. Nothing contributed in that war more to the success of the French than the false intelligence by which their enemies, and England more especially, were constantly misled. I saw Captain Young at Leghorn, who had just arrived with despatches to the Admiral, to apprise him that he might now at length rely on a more cordial co-operation from the Spaniards, and on that very day Manfredini, the real Minister of Tuscany, told me of the signature of peace between the Court of Madrid and the French Republick. Surprise, however, at such ignorance was always much diminished upon an acquaintance with those employed in our diplomacy. In Italy there was not one man of talents equal to his situation. I might perhaps except Mr. Jackson, our chargé d'affaires at Turin; but he does not appear to have shone in procuring good intelligence, as he furnished General Melas with the accounts which misled him in the campaign of 1800. Mr. Drake had indeed been bred to business, and wrote with eloquence and facility. Mr.

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Pitt, on reading his despatches, was struck with his being "the most accomplished man in the line of diplomacy." Discernment was not one of those accomplishments: a predilection for the marvellous rendered his credulity excessive, and it became more hazardous by being supported with some degree of ingenuity.* I never met with a man who took such pains to be deceived. He had folios of false intelligence. The less probable the relation, the greater he thought his merit in discovering it, and consequently the more disposed was he to believe it. He read me reports of the secret consultations of the Comité de Salut publique at Paris, in which the opinions and the motives too of each interlocutor were arranged in the form of a set speech, and the whole dialogue given in the shape of a debate, or rather of a tragedy, and a very

* This passage was written in 1801 or 1802, and the subsequent events of 1805, when Drake became the dupe of Mehée de la Touche, make me recur to it with some degree of self-complacency.

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bad and improbable one; yet had they all been sent, with great despatch and secrecy, to our Foreign Office, and, strange to say, read with relish and credited by our Ministers. I should add that Drake was an obliging and friendly man, and had some talents which, if properly employed, might have been serviceable to himself and to his country.

I left Italy in the spring of 1796, and returned by Trieste, Vienna, Dresden, Berlin, and Hamburgh to England. The reverses on the Continent had produced much consternation in England, but changed the relative strength of the two parties in the State much less than might have been expected. The force of Opposition in the new Parliament of 1796 was less than in the preceding one. When I left England in 1793, Mr. Fox, in addition to the vexations of his political situation, had to struggle with great pecuniary embarrassments. His imprudence in such matters, the common topick of censure among his enemies, enhanced the merit of his steady and disinterested adherence, under the pres-

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sure of distress, to the principles and party which he approved; and with many plausible opportunities and tempting offers he never stooped to repair his fortune at the expense of a friendship however slight, unpopular, or precarious, or by the sacrifice of an opinion* however inconvenient to himself or unknown to the world. At length his political friends, by a large contribution, relieved him from his debts, and left him in possession of a competent but not splendid income. The following correspondence between him and Serjeant Adair took place on the occasion.

"Lincoln's Inn Fields,
June 5. 1793.

"Dear Sir,

"Seldom in my life have I experienced more heartfelt pleasure than in obeying the commands of the committee, whose names you will see in one of the enclosed resolutions, who have directed me to communicate to you the proceedings of a meeting, respectable as fortune, rank, and cha-

* Οὐ γὰρ δοκεῖν ἄριστος ἀλλ' εἶναι θέλε. SOPH.

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racter could make it. I flatter myself you will not be displeased with this most convincing proof of esteem, from so many and so honourable persons, who, far from imagining that they are about to confer any obligations upon you, will, I am confident, think themselves honoured and obliged by your favourable acceptance of their endeavours to effectuate an object they have most deeply at heart. I have the honour to be, with the most cordial esteem and respect, Dear Sir, your faithful and obedient Servant,

(Signed) "J. ADAIR."

"St. Anne's Hill,
June 6. 1793.

"Dear Sir,

"You will easily believe that it is not a mere form of words, when I say that I am wholly at a loss how to express my feelings on the event which you have in so kind a manner communicated to me. In difficult cases it is not unusual to inquire what others have done or said in like circumstances; but in my situation this resource

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is denied me; for where am I to look for an instance of such a proof of publick esteem as that which is offered to me? To receive at once from the publick, such a testimony to the disinterestedness of my conduct, and such a reward as the most interested would think their lives well spent in obtaining, is a rare instance of felicity, which seems to have been reserved for me. It would be gross affectation, if, in my circumstances, I were to pretend that what is intended for me is not of itself of the highest value. But it is with perfect sincerity I declare, that no other manner in which a fortune could have come to me would have been so highly gratifying to every feeling of my heart. I accept, therefore, with the most sincere gratitude, the kindness of the publick; and consider it as an additional obligation upon me, if any were wanting, to continue steady to the principles which I have uniformly professed, and to persevere in that honest and independent line of conduct, to which alone I am conscious that I

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am indebted for this and for every other mark of publick approbation.

"I hope I need not add, my dear Sir, that I could not have received this honourable message through a more acceptable channel. I am, with great truth,

"My dear Sir,

"Your obliged humble Servant,

(Signed) "C. J. Fox."

The frankness and gratitude with which he thus accepted the sum was of a piece with the natural simplicity of his character, and the whole transaction was surely one of the most honourable that ever occurred in the life of a publick man. There was, indeed, some exaggeration and misrepresentation of a very few instances, in which the zeal of his friends outstepped their delicacy in applying for subscriptions, but they never reached his ears. I should add, that Mr. Fox, notwithstanding his early and, with the exception of his two short administrations, uninterrupted habits, not only never visited Newmarket, but never

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played after he had been thus relieved from the consequences of his former extravagance, by the generous interposition of his political friends. It required, no doubt, considerable fortitude to resist a vice, in which he had so long and so largely indulged; but such were the happy elements of his temper and disposition, that the recollection of stronger excitements never deadened in him the relish for tamer and more innocent amusements and pursuits. In a letter to me of the 14th of June, 1793, he thus speaks of the event:—"You will hear from others of what has been done, and is doing for me. I may, perhaps, flatter myself; but I think it is the most honourable thing that ever happened to any man. The sum which has been raised is such, as will pay all my debts that are in any degree burthensome, and give me an income, upon which I can live comfortably without contracting any more:" he adds on publick matters, in the same letter, "things at Paris have been going regularly from bad to worse, and yet the armies fight like

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heroes, and the Allies have hitherto made no impression of consequence. People here begin to be heartily tired of the war, in some degree, owing to the disgust pretty generally felt at the scandalous conduct of the Empress of Russia with respect to Poland, but chiefly to the extreme distress which is felt at home. I do not know whether there is not some comfort in seeing, that while the French are doing all in their power to make the name of liberty odious to the world, the despots are conducting themselves so as to show that tyranny is worse. I believe that the love of political liberty is not an error; but, if it is one, I am sure that I shall never be converted from it, and I hope you never will. If it be an illusion, it is one that has brought forth more of the best qualities and exertions of the human mind, than all other causes put together; and it serves to give an interest in the affairs of the world, which without it would be insipid."

Soon afterwards, the Anti-Jacobin spirit, both in England and Scotland, seems to

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have increased, but the war certainly declined in popularity upon the failure of the siege of Dunkirk. That operation originated with the English Government against the advice of all reasonable military men. It produced differences in the Cabinet here and dissensions among the Allies. The Duke of Richmond quitted the Ordnance, ascribing the failure to the Duke of York, and the Duke of York, or at least his friends, insinuated that it had arisen from the neglect or the malicious delays of the Ordnance.

The known causes of enmity, arising from the duel between the Duke of York and Charles Lenox, and the intractable temper of the Duke of Richmond, gave some currency to such a charge, though it implied an inattention to his official duties in the Duke of Richmond, which was the last fault that even an enemy would impute to so active and conscientious a man. It must be acknowledged that the Duke of York's subsequent career as a General,

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proves that his defeats may be accounted for without criminating any minister, though it be but just to add, that he would not stoop to excuse himself by imputing any blame to another, which he did not sincerely think he deserved. The Court was no doubt pleased at the resignation of the Duke of Richmond. His general views were far from being agreeable to the King. His early political conduct was neither forgotten nor forgiven, and his tenacity of temper would often throw obstacles in the way, even of innocent projects. But the Country and the Ministry sustained a loss by his retirement. Though he frequently rendered himself odious, he always promoted the interests of the Service at less expense, and with more ability, than any of his predecessors or successors. The Austrians were discontented at the siege of Dunkirk, and discomposed, but not surprised, by the failure of it. Count de Morcy, who, though not the ostensible, was the real director of their affairs in the Netherlands, disclosed to

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Sir Gilbert Elliott* the plan they wished to pursue, and at that time thought very practicable. They were to secure the whole of the French territory north of the Somme, and they had settled (and even marked out on the map) the portion of it, which if ceded, would prevail on them to make peace with the Republick. Austria had harboured some such selfish designs from the commencement of the war. I have been assured by M. de Calonne, and others present at the Duke of Brunswick's campaign, that the King of Prussia did not desert the Confederacy†, till he had detected the separate designs of Austria, and felt himself in some degree sacrificed by their perfidious policy. He was, to the day of his death, a jealous and bigoted enemy of every liberal principle of government, and greatly and sincerely alarmed at the success

* Sir Gilbert himself, when Lord Minto, told me this circumstance in 1805.

† This passage, written many years before the appearance of his Memoires d'un homme d'état, is strongly confirmed in that very curious and authentick publication.

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of the French Revolution. Yet, by a strange fatality, in spite of his earnestness in the cause of Crowned Heads, he appeared, and will probably be represented, as the Arch-Apostate from it; and, in spite of his incapacity for government, may pass with posterity for a liberal, judicious, and successful Prince. Mr. Pitt at this period wavered between two distinct and incompatible objects, the restoration of the French monarchy in all its splendour, and the dismemberment, or at least restriction, of the power of France. To what quality in his character this fluctuation of councils was to be traced, those who knew him, not I, must explain. Neither of the objects was attained, and the failure, with some appearance of reason, is attributed to the irresolution of his councils. He certainly forfeited the good opinion of Mr. Burke, and incurred the censure of many of his followers. Yet they, while they apprehended the inadequacy of the means, or at least of the administration of those means, to the object, never ceased to pursue it, all

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hopeless as it was. Discontented with the Allies, and distrustful of their associates in the Cabinet, they consented to become members of it in 1794. As I never conversed with the Duke of Portland, their nominal head, in my life, I can say little about him. His patience in listening and his munificence (a virtue which he seems to have left behind him when he quitted the Whigs) were the chief topicks of commendation. When he was at the head of Opposition his talent was confined to letter writing; and when that talent is accompanied, as it was with him, with a great propensity to the practice of it, it is a blemish, not an ornament, a misfortune, not an endowment. He felt great repugnance to accepting office, and at least as great to resigning it. He was the last of his set to give his consent to either measure. Mr. Pitt, in his second administration (1805), hinted to him the propriety of such a step, in a manner that it is said the Duke never forgave; and when in the ensuing year Mr. Fox was in place, the Duke conveyed to

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him the sense he retained of the uncivil way in which the late minister had dismissed him. Though he was in the course of the next thirteen years, Secretary of State, President of the Council, and first Lord of the Treasury, he lost consideration and character from the moment he took office. This was not the case of others who joined the Ministry with him. Lord Fitzwilliam and Lord Spencer took office; Lord Loughborough, Lord Howard, and, I think, Mr. Windham, had preceded him. Mr. Grenville, Lord Fitzwilliam, and Lord Spencer, took leave of Mr. Fox, in a very handsome letter, assigning the reasons, and lamenting the necessity of a separation, nearly at the same time that the Duke of Portland and these seceders from the Whig party, joined Mr. Pitt's administration.

Most of the Irish patriots, and Mr. Grattan among them, agreed to support the war, concluding that the conciliatory measures which they recommended in the government of Ireland were to be the price of their acquiescence and accession. They have been

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much blamed for this step. It is no part of my purpose to investigate their motives or conduct, and still less to defend them for sanctioning measures which I greatly disapprove and deeply lament. Yet it is possible that they might not think themselves justified, on general grounds only and without reference to Irish questions, in resisting a war which had been decided upon in England, especially, if by the suppression of their objections to that war, they were likely to obtain some terms for the country which they were more particularly bound to serve. That they had such expectations cannot be doubted. They were distinctly encouraged in them by the Duke of Portland: "at least we have secured the Catholicks," said he to some English friends; and he did not scruple to affirm to Mr. Grattan, that his chief object in taking office was to secure the objects which the Irish Whigs had pursued, and a large share of the patronage and power in Ireland to their party. Nearly thus did Lord Fitzwilliam understand it. Possibly,

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Mr. Pitt deceived the Duke of Portland; possibly, the Duke of Portland misunderstood Mr. Pitt; possibly, without misunderstanding him, he chose to exceed his powers in the instructions given to Lord Fitzwilliam. But none can doubt that Lord Fitzwilliam did receive full authority to act as he did,—that is, as he stated in the debate on the Union, "not to bring forward any concession to Catholicks, as a measure of Government, but if brought forward by any person not in the service of Government, to give it his full and cordial support." Lord Fitzwilliam, on his recall from his lord-lieutenancy, was much pleased by the warm and unreserved manner in which Mr. Fox took up the cause of his old friend. He conveyed his sense of the obligation through a third person, though, after repeating and lamenting the difference between them upon other not less important publick matters, he declined any direct intercourse or concert, even upon points of Irish policy, on which they agreed so entirely. But though Lord Fitzwilliam abstained from any im-

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mediate political reconciliation with his old schoolfellow and early friend, and though he continued, with unabated zeal, to preach up eternal war, and to listen to the forebodings of Burke, on every measure tending to reform, yet his breach with Ministers was the signal for many to resume, and afforded facilities to yet more to slide into, their old habits of opposition to Pitt and to the Court. Enemy, as he was both to peace and to reform, he could not himself avoid giving and receiving publick assistance from Opposition, on questions relating to Ireland, to the militia, and even occasionally to the conduct, though not to the principle, of the war. Those most attached to him (and there were not fewer than five members of the House of Lords), rejoiced at every step he made towards Opposition, and supported him cordially and eagerly on all such occasions, but either followed him reluctantly or absented themselves altogether from such questions as compelled him to vote with the majority.

After Burke retired from Parliament, the

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inclinations of early and sincere friendship operated yet more powerfully on his honourable and affectionate mind. In Ireland, all the Whigs fell back into Opposition without reserve, exception, or delay. In England, many of the leading families, among which are to be reckoned those of Cavendish and Ponsonby, were attracted to that party by the natural laws of political gravitation, assisted by many private and publick impulses in the minds of individuals. The Cavendishes had indeed rather acquiesced in than promoted, the union with Mr. Pitt. The influence which the Duke of Portland possessed over them as head of the party, in some measure nominated by themselves, was purely nominal after the death of his duchess. The Duke of Devonshire, himself a man of little popular feeling and still less exertion, but of great probity, honour, and good sense, and fond of the society of Mr. Fox and of his immediate friends, had been with great difficulty brought to vote once or twice with the Administration. Some branches of his family continued uninter-

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ruptedly with Mr. Fox; scarce any voted throughout any one session against him, and none of name accepted either office or dignity from Mr. Pitt. In smoothing the way, if not to political reconciliation, to renewed habits of familiarity and friendship with Mr. Fox, the Duchess of Devonshire was not a little instrumental. In a very short time after the feverish and unnatural separation in 1793, she had the satisfaction to see most of that society, of which she was the ornament and soul, reunited in the support of Mr. Fox, for whose transcendent genius, generous character, and open temper (so congenial with her own), she had always felt and expressed the warmest and most unaffected enthusiasm. Nor were these the only circumstances previous to the dissolution of 1796, which tended to increase the importance of the party in opposition. The Duke of Bedford, who till 1792 had followed emphatically and silently the politicks of Mr. Fox, disapproved strongly of the association of the Friends of the People. His brother, Lord John (after-

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wards Duke), quitted it with a view to please him. But the Duke of Bedford was far from approving, even at that early period, of the advances made by the Duke of Portland and his friends to Mr. Pitt's administration. He told me, even in 1793, that the fear of exposing himself by speaking incorrect English, alone prevented him from expressing in the House of Lords, his dislike to the war, and his disgust at the manner in which Mr. Fox was calumniated by his enemies and deserted by many of his friends. He soon afterwards began to take an active part both in and out of the House. His princely fortune, and the influence of the name of Russell, were great accessions to the party; but as his character opened and his understanding improved, he was found to bring yet greater, in the firmness of his character, the solidity of his judgment, the generosity and elevated simplicity of his mind.

An increasing intimacy with Lord Lauderdale strengthened his attachment to their common friend Mr. Fox, and helped

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to inure him to business. It was whimsical that the instructions of Lord Lauderdale, who spoke broad Scotch, and was not remarkable for correct grammar even in that dialect, should have enabled his friend to take a part in debate, creditable to himself, and useful to the country; but so it was. Lord Lauderdale's earnestness and activity urged the Duke of Bedford to read everything that bore upon the political questions of the day; and though the works which he pointed out were neither select nor classical, they set a mind, naturally vigorous, thinking on grave and important subjects, and they furnished a memory uncommonly retentive, with phraseology, which, if not brilliant or poetical, was adapted to parliamentary discussion. The Duke of Bedford's fluency, his readiness in argument, and in calculation especially, and, above all, his intrepid avowal of every opinion which he held, would have made him remarkable in any publick assembly, even if he had not possessed to so high a degree the advantages

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of rank, youth, person, riches, and character; with the absence of all sprightliness or classical ornament, and with the fault of prolixity, he became in the course of two sessions a leading debater in the House, as well as a considerable man in the country. Besides these positive accessions of strength to the Opposition, many seeds of discontent were imperceptibly sown during the year 1795 among the supporters of the Ministry, which time brought to maturity. Among these may be reckoned the influence of Carlton House. The Prince of Wales thought himself duped by Mr. Pitt about the payment of his debts at the time of his marriage. He had been treated superciliously more than once by Mr. Pitt, and he had never liked him, though his dread of revolutionary principles, quickened by a recent quarrel with the Duke of Orleans, had rendered him eager, and even vociferous, for the war. The last injury (real or supposed) which he had received from Mr.

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Pitt, by the latter's acquiescing in devoting on his marriage the whole increase of his revenue to the payment of his debts, sank into his weak and forgetful mind deeper than usual, because he was continually reminded of it by his connexion with a woman whom he loathed.

The new Parliament was scarcely chosen, when I landed at Yarmouth in 1796. I took my seat in the first session, but I never spoke, and seldom attended.

The period between my arrival in England and my first speech in Parliament, was very eventful. In it were comprised Lord Malmsbury's negotiation at Paris, the stoppage of the Bank, the victory of St. Vincent's, the peace of Campo Formio, the Mutiny, the victory of Camperdown, the revolution of the 18th Fructidor, and the consequent rupture of a second negotiation through Lord Malmsbury at Lisle. It was the opinion of impartial men that our first negotiation at Paris, if not insincere, was at least very foolish, but that

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the negotiation at Lisle exposed the unreasonable pretensions and preposterous conduct of the French in a light which reconciled the country to the continuance of war, and indeed demonstrated that, until a change of men should alter the respective disposition of the two Governments, the attainment of peace was impossible.

During the early part of the session the stoppage of the Bank, and the Austrian subsidy, which had contributed to produce a scarcity of the precious metals, were the subjects which chiefly occupied the attention of Parliament. It is strange enough that the disembarkment of a few French convicts* in Wales, actually led to a very important event. It produced that run upon the Bank which occasioned the fatal stop-

* They surrendered to a small, and far from formidable, corps of Welsh militia or volunteers; but chiefly, it is said, from mistaking the red cloaks of the Welsh women at a distance for military reinforcements. Those women so dressed were posted, they say, on the hill by Lord Cawdor, to produce that effect.

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pages, and that train of evils which a dishonest and unwise system, by facilitating lavish expenditure, and contracting engagements in a shifting and fluctuating currency, entailed upon the country for more than twenty years. Mr. Fox considered the stoppage to be a bankruptcy, and dated his letter to me announcing it, "the first day of our national bankruptcy."

The Opposition soon afterwards resorted to an ill-advised secession from Parliament. That measure, in which Mr. Fox acquiesced from indolence rather than from judgment, originated chiefly with Mr. Grey, Lord Lauderdale, and the Duke of Bedford. Mr. Grey, naturally impatient, was much irritated at the perpetual misrepresentations to which the language of Opposition was exposed; and the Duke of Bedford was laughed at by Lauderdale—himself excluded as an unelected Scotch Peer from Parliament—into a very mistaken notion that he was weary of the labour and hopelessness of debate and attendance in the House of Lords. Erskine,

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whose attendance in the House of Commons interfered much with the more profitable exertions of his profession, and also did not feed his vanity with so much additional fame as an orator as might well have been expected, was earnest and vehement for retiring. Mr. Fox, when the painful division of the party in 1793 took place, and when his debts had been discharged by friends who then unfortunately separated, had wished to retire from publick life altogether, and had actually taken steps for quitting Parliament. He relinquished that design, partly no doubt from the secret remonstrances of his private friends, and of General Fitzpatrick in particular, but chiefly from a sense of duty to the publick, and of honour to those who in his conscience he thought were serving the cause of freedom, and exposing themselves to much obloquy and to severe injury by so doing. His generous temper could not reconcile itself to quitting them at such a moment; when, however, those very persons thought that a compliance

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with his inclinations had become a duty, he could no longer resist them. He could not press them to attend when he felt so strong a desire to secede. He warned them, however, that if he once took leave of the House, it would be no easy matter to bring him back. The first meeting of Opposition that I ever attended, was for the purpose of settling the motion with which they were to secede from both Houses of Parliament. Lord Guildford and General Fitzpatrick expressed their disapprobation of such a measure; but the former acknowledged himself to be so bad an attendant, that he had hardly a right to urge others to persist in what he practised so little. He added, however, that if they resolved to secede, he for one would never set his foot in the House of Lords again. This promise was almost totally kept, and he was, I believe, the only man there who never took part in any political debate after that meeting. He spoke indeed some time afterwards against Lord Auckland's Bill for preventing intermarriage of the parties after divorce, and he spoke, as he always did, like a man

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of sound sense and right feeling. He was, even in 1796, in bad health; and after lingering some years, died of the complaint with which he was then threatened. He had been very intemperate early in life, and at all times drank hard. He was of an indolent, careless disposition, easily satisfied with his company, averse to, if not incapable of, any extraordinary exertion of mind, or any great and powerful emotion. Yet he had many of the qualities requisite to form a leading publick man,—high honour, great frankness, a sound understanding, considerable talents for publick speaking, and a temper more conciliatory than any man, Mr. Fox excepted, among the leaders of Opposition. Mr. Fox thought him superior to his father in sterling abilities, in cultivation of mind, and decision of character. Even in wit and humour, though confessedly inferior to Lord North, he was by no means deficient. He had at an early period of life vehemently opposed Parliamentary Reform; and though he might acquiesce in it, he said

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that he could not take it up with all the zeal of a convert. It was chiefly on this account determined that Grey should move Parliamentary Reform in the Commons, that the Duke of Bedford should prepare an address on the State of the Nation in the Lords, and that they and their supporters should, on those motions, respectively declare their conviction of the uselessness of attendance in Parliament. They did so, and Mr. Fox, in the course of his speech on Parliamentary Reform, announced his intention of *devoting a larger portion of his time to his private pursuits* nearly in the very words which he had used in the private meeting of his friends in South Street. Other meetings, however, were held previous to that debate. Among the rest, I recollect a dinner at a tavern, at which Mr. Tierney and many other members of Parliament were present. Mr. Tierney had lately seated himself for Southwark by pleading his own cause before two committees, and persuading them to declare the candidate at the head of the poll ineligible on the score of bribery. He was,

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as Mr. Courtenay said, bound to love minorities, for he represented one. At the dinner he offered to take the Chiltern Hundreds, but declared that if he remained in Parliament, he must and would continue to discharge his duty by attendance. He spoke openly, and did his utmost to prevail on Mr. Fox and his friends not to secede. He was subsequently much blamed for this proceeding; and it is not to be denied that his attendance was sufficient to defeat the object of secession. It is, however, equally true that it was an obstacle to its success, of which those who adopted it were previously aware. Mr. Fox at the dinner to which I allude, with his usual candour and good humour, acknowledged that the *onus probandi* lay with the seceders. "We," said he, "have to explain to Mr. Tierney why we leave the House of Commons, not Mr. Tierney to account to us for staying there." The friends of Mr. Fox, however, were soon afterwards very severe in their remarks on the motives and conduct of Mr. Tierney; and he timidly and injudiciously endea-

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voured to disarm their censures by extravagant and overrated declarations of personal attachment to Mr. Fox, which he never felt, and had indeed never been called upon to express. In this he was wrong, and in his subsequent efforts to bring back Mr. Grey, *without Mr. Fox*, and to instil into his mind the notion of forming a party independent of Mr. Fox, he was yet more so; but on the question of secession he appeared to me to act fairly, and to be as accommodating as the fundamental difference of opinion upon the principle of it allowed him to be. Mr. Sheridan attended none of these meetings. He disapproved of the secession, yet he was among the loudest in condemning Tierney's attendance, and spreading a distrust of his motives. He, in truth, speculated on Mr. Fox's going out of Parliament; and his vanity or jealousy made him always harbour a secret wish to be member for Westminster. Lord Lansdowne never concealed his disapprobation of the seceders: he said to me, "Is your Uncle aware of what he is doing? Secession

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means rebellion, or it is nonsense." As early as the summer of 1797, Mr. Fox in a letter to me expressed himself thus: "Pray, if there is any opportunity of talking about the 'secession,' say, what is the truth, that there was not agreement enough of opinion upon the subject to make it possible to take what one may call a *measure* upon the subject, but that most of us thought that, after the proposition for Reform, we might fairly enough stay away, considering the previous events of the session, and the behaviour of Parliament upon them."

It is in truth difficult, even after the event, to form a correct judgment of the effect of this celebrated secession of Mr. Fox and his party. The sensation likely to be produced by it, was lost in the consternation spread by the mutiny of the Fleet. The effect, too, of such a measure was defeated by its being incomplete. Tierney attended constantly; Sheridan frequently appeared; and even those who had called most loudly for secession, occasionally returned to the House of Commons. On the other hand, I

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have been assured that Government was greatly embarrassed by its consequences; that Mr. Pitt earnestly laboured to draw his opponents back to Parliament, and that, with that view, he sometimes taunted and attempted to exasperate the absent members, and at others studiously magnified the talents and importance of those who were left behind. He is said to have apprehended that the loss of a theatre in which he could defend his measures, would deprive him of opportunities of ascertaining, as well as of leading the publick opinion; and he is also said to have found, that the want of opponents in Parliament deprived him of the readiest weapon which he could hold up in terrorem to the King, to force his compliance with any unpalatable measure, or to deter him from insisting on unreasonable objects. It is certain that, during the last three years of Mr. Pitt's Administration, the Court more frequently thwarted the ostensible Ministers in small matters, and resorted with greater success to those little arts which had distinguished and disgraced the early

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part of George the Third's reign, than had been usual, or perhaps possible, in the interval which elapsed between the King's illness in 1788 and the secession in 1796. One of the effects of the secession was to raise Mr. Tierney's importance. He obtained and deserved great credit for his knowledge in finance, for a plain yet lively and agreeable style of speaking, for good sense in business, great quickness in repartee, and pleasant manners in society; but he lost the confidence of the violent party to whom he owed his seat and the commendations studiously lavished on his parliamentary abilities by the adherents of Mr. Pitt, did not ingratiate him with those who had from the first stigmatised his attendance as a desertion of party, and who afterwards with more reason suspected that he dreaded, rather than desired, the return of Mr. Fox to his place in the House of Commons. Immediately after the secession, meetings were promoted by Opposition with some success for the removal of Ministers, and a negotiation for peace. The combination of Parlia-

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mentary Reform with these objects rather detracted from their popularity. The French soon after silenced all the murmurs for peace by their conduct in the negotiation at Lisle. Even the sensation produced by other untoward events, such as the stoppage of the Bank, was mitigated by that darling and most natural subject of English exultation, Great Naval Victories. The result of the engagement off St. Vincent's was indeed glorious to our arms, and manifestly owing to the great abilities of Sir John Jervis, who was thereupon created Earl St. Vincent. His severe but well considered discipline, and his firm, not to say arbitrary, disposition, preserved his fleet from the contagion of mutiny, and contributed, with the victory of Admiral Duncan over the Dutch, to dispel the gloom which the conduct of our seamen at Portsmouth and at the Nore had thrown over the branch of publick service which Englishmen contemplate with the greatest affection. The manner in which the Ministers had met those disasters, especially at Portsmouth,

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was not very creditable to their sagacity or their firmness. To the reasonableness of any request from the seamen, they yielded nothing; to the unreasonable and mutinous manner of demanding it, they yielded all. The points conceded at Portsmouth should have been granted long before. If it be true that private intelligence had been conveyed through Lord Howe, that some such boons were necessary to avert the growing discontent among the sailors, and that Lord Howe had advised a timely concession, it was surely mad and criminal to withhold them so long. They were in themselves unobjectionable; but when yielded to mutineers as the price of their submission, they sanctioned a mode of demanding subversive of all discipline, and destructive of the very being of a navy. The luck of Ministers was greater than their merit; Sheridan courted popularity with his opponents by a flaming speech, at least as remarkable for its bombast as its eloquence; and not a Jack who attended Parliament, wagged his tongue in

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censure of the conduct of the Admiralty, which was open to many just animadversions on the score of procrastination, irresolution, and imprudence. Mr. Pitt, at that very critical and alarming period, showed great fortitude or great indifference. The worst and most alarming news arrived late at night. Lord Spencer found Mr. Pitt retired to his room and in bed, told him, at his bedside, the events, and consulted him on the measures to be taken. He had not left the room two minutes, when something that he had omitted recurring to him, he returned, and found Mr. Pitt in a sound sleep.

The conduct of the French at Lisle had raised a general feeling of indignation throughout the country. Mr. Pitt availed himself of it, to introduce what he called a solid system of finance, but what was a very imperfect and ineffectual attempt to raise the supplies within the year. His proposal was to triple, quadruple, and, in some cases, quintuple the assessed taxes, and to assume the assessment of the pre-

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ceding year as the criterion. So burthensome and unjust a project could not but excite alarm and create discontent. Petitions against a tax bill pending in Parliament are not admitted by the House of Commons; so recourse was had to resolutions and instructions to the members, and meetings were held for this purpose in every parish of London and Westminster, and their environs. I heard my own voice in publick for the first time, in moving a string of resolutions in Kensington, which were unanimously adopted. As these meetings were general throughout Westminster, and all the resolutions ended with an instruction to the member to oppose the tax, Mr. Fox, after some hesitation, was prevailed upon to attend, but observed that, if such calls were frequent, he should go out of Parliament. In the memorable debate which ensued, Mr. Pitt made a spirited and eloquent, but strange and imprudent speech. He avowed that his chief object, in negotiating at Lisle, was to establish this "solid system of finance:"

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he protested, indeed, that he had laboured for peace, but he * acknowledged that he was rejoiced, not disappointed, at the failure of his endeavours. It was not extraordinary that the sincerity of his professions should be questioned, when he thus avowed that his opinions and wishes had all along been at variance with them, and with his actions. The assessed tax bill was somewhat mitigated in the Commons, but it was so unjust in its very principle, that it met with resistance in every stage of its progress. In the Lords, the Duke of Bedford, though he had no constituents to insist on his attendance, was in his place. All the seceders, or nearly all, had come forward in the Commons. I thought this a fair opportunity of making my maiden speech in Parliament, and I opened the debate by attempting to express at length, not only my ob-

* It is curious enough, that Napoleon, some years afterwards, in 1803, made the same admission respecting his negotiations with Lord Whitworth, and used nearly the same expressions in a private conversation with Mr. Gallois.

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jections to the bill, but my abhorrence of the principles, and my apprehensions of the consequences of the war, which it was devised to support. My speech was hurried and confused; my delivery at times rapid and unintelligible, at others hesitating and ungraceful. Yet I was told that parts of it, and yet more my reply, held out great promise of improvement; and some of the older peers, though little disposed to encourage one of my principles and connexions, flattered me by saying that my manner reminded them of my grandfather. I was, in truth, myself, more surprised by my success, small as it was, than discouraged by my defects, of which, however, I was not insensible. I entered a protest containing, in addition to my objections to the bill, my conviction of the necessity of the change of Ministers, and of a reform of Parliament. Mr. Fox had advised me to draw it up, and I found it, as he had foretold, a good preparation for a speech, and not an unuseful exercise in itself, inasmuch as the practice familiarises one with parliamentary lan-

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guage, and by its very form imposes a precision and closeness of reasoning, not commonly attained in young men's voluntary compositions.

It would answer no end, to enumerate the various attempts made during the ensuing three years, to bring back the seceders to Parliament, and the partial or occasional success of such endeavours. In the meanwhile, the restlessness which many felt at the inaction, to which they had condemned themselves, broke out in various ways. Some penned long papers or manifestoes, explanatory of the conduct of Opposition, which they proposed that the seceding members should sign; others were for a publick and pointed declaration, from the leading men of both Houses, to pledge themselves to accept of no office unless Parliamentary Reform and other objects were attained. These projects were abandoned upon the earnest remonstrances of Mr. Francis and others of the party. Some of the seceders then vented their pent up matter in pamphlets; others disburthened

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themselves in private audiences with the King; but Mr. Fox himself grew more and more averse to any attendance, and the *secession* was rapidly becoming what Mr. Francis called it, *dispersion*, when the insurrection broke out in Ireland. The measures which led to that event, suggested by Lord Clare, and by the remorseless faction of Orangemen who called themselves the Protestant Ascendancy, roused the indignation of every man who had a sense of justice, or the feelings of humanity. The horror which the outrages, perpetrated with the sanction of Government, would in any case have excited in the breast of Mr. Fox, was heightened by the death of his cousin, Lord Edward Fitzgerald, to whom he was affectionately attached, and who

Utcunque ferent ea facta minores,

fell a sacrifice to his generous love of freedom, and to his romantick notions of publick duty and patriotism. His memory is still cherished by his countrymen, and

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the poetry of Moore is in unison with the feelings of Irishmen:

Oh breathe not his name, let it sleep in the shade,
Where cold and unhonor'd his relics are laid;
Sad, silent, and dark, be the tears that we shed,
As the night dew that falls on the grass o'er his head.

But the night dew that falls, tho' in silence it weeps,
Shall brighten with verdure the grave where he sleeps;
And the tear that we shed, tho' in secret it roll,
Shall long keep his mem'ry green in our soul.

Mine is certainly the testimony of one who loved him sincerely in private; and my friendship may, in the opinion of many, disqualify me from the office of recording his actions, or preserving his character.

But more than * twenty years have now passed away. Many of my political opinions are softened, my predilections for some men weakened, my prejudices against

* I transcribe this volume in 1824; and as I approve of what I had written twelve or fourteen years ago, I insert *more than twenty years*, it being twenty six years since Lord Edward died.

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others removed, but my approbation of Lord Edward Fitzgerald's actions remains unaltered and unshaken. His country was bleeding under one of the hardest tyrannies that our times have witnessed. He who thinks a man can be even excused in such circumstances, by any other consideration than that of despair, from opposing his pretended government by force, seems to me to sanction a principle which would ensure impunity to the greatest of all human delinquents, or at least to those who produce the greatest misery among mankind. To have rejected French assistance, and yet raised the standard of revolt in Ireland, would have been to produce a civil war without the possibility of success. If, therefore, the succours from France manifestly exposed the people of Ireland, in case of success, to a tyranny as oppressive as that under which they were then groaning, the insurrection was not to be justified; but if, upon a fair and dispassionate comparison of the different dangers to which they were exposed, it appeared

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that the interests of France, the distance of that country, and the difficulty of the communication afforded to the people of Ireland a reasonable prospect of escaping subjection to France after they had thrown off all dependence on England by the means of French troops, the chance of so prosperous an issue might fully justify the perilous experiment which the United Irishmen then determined to make.

Such was unquestionably the view taken of the subject by Lord Edward. His actions showed that he was not blind to the danger which might be apprehended from a French force successful in his country. Perhaps on the score of prudence (and prudence is the most indispensable virtue on such occasions) he was more open to reproach from his friends for weakening the prospect of success against his chief enemy, the English Government, by precautions against his auxiliaries, than for exposing his country too wantonly to the danger of being ultimately subjugated by those whom he called in to its assist-

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ance. The whole history of Irish insurrections and Union forms not a parallel, but a contrast, to the Jacobite conspiracies and the Union between England and Scotland. In Scotland, the Tory principles of a few great families and national pride, united some powerful interests, even in a country where the people were Presbyterian, in favour of a Roman Catholick Prince. In Ireland, a sense of suffering and deep resentment for the persecution of ages, connected the great mass of Catholicks with a democratical republick, yet reeking with the spoils of a popish establishment. The Scotch Jacobites often held back from the expectation of a more favourable season, and their leaders generally demanded greater succours than the French Court was willing or able to grant. The Irish Catholicks, on the contrary, were goaded into premature hostility before their northern countrymen were ready to co-operate, or their foreign succours had arrived; and thus a dread of being overwhelmed by too large a force from their allies, having produced

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delay and disunion among them, led to a detection of their designs, and to the loss of their best opportunity. The Union was the chief source of disaffection in Scotland, and one of the great causes of the two rebellions of 1715 and 1744. On the other hand, the insurrection in Ireland was the chief cause of the Union, by furnishing the English Government with both the means and the pretext for accomplishing a measure which in no other circumstances could have been attempted. These consequences of his undertaking, and its discomfiture, Lord Edward Fitzgerald never lived to witness. His early arrest was a fatal blow to the whole design of the insurrection. For though his abilities were not of the first order, nor even equal to those of some* engaged in the same cause; yet he combined advantages of birth, education, and personal character,

* Mr. Emmett, now a lawyer in the United States, is always said to have been the ablest man among the Irish conspirators; but he, too, was arrested nearly at the same time with Lord Edward.

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which would have enabled him to reconcile, better than any other man, the jarring materials of which the conspiracy was composed. He could, too, have directed their military operations, if not with consummate skill, at least with less ignorance and rashness than characterised all their wretched efforts in the field. He had been educated in the army, and was exceedingly beloved by those with whom he served. His political conduct, both in the Irish House of Commons and in Westminster, where he canvassed for Mr. Fox, soon exposed him to some mortifications from his uncle, the Duke of Richmond; and at the beginning of 1793, he was, in common with Lord Temple and Major Gawler, dismissed the service, for no other crime than that of maintaining opinions, in private conversation and at mess, which Ministers considered improper and dangerous. With whom that violent measure originated, I know not; the Duke of Richmond was not inclined to exert himself in his favour, but certainly did not suggest his dismissal.

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The Duke of York condemned so unusual a step, and laboured, when Commander-in-chief, though in vain, to revoke it. Lord Edward was a good officer. The plans found among his papers showed much combination, and considerable knowledge of the principles of defence. His apprehension was so quick, and his courage so constitutional, that he would have applied, without disturbance, all the faculties which he possessed to any emergency, however sudden, and in the moment of the greatest danger or confusion. He was, among the United Irish, scarcely less considerable for his political, than his military, qualifications. His name, never unpopular with the Catholicks, allayed the prejudices which they would otherwise have felt against a Protestant leader, while his education and benevolence quieted the fears of the Northern Presbyterians, on whose minds was engraven, by recollection and tradition, an inveterate disgust of Popery and Papists. His temper was happily formed to engage the affections of a warm-hearted people.

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A cheerful and intelligent countenance, an artless gaiety of manner, without reserve, but without intrusion, and a careless, yet inoffensive intrepidity, both in conversation and in action, fascinated his slightest acquaintances, and disarmed the rancour of even bitter opponents. These, indeed, were only the indications of more solid qualities—an open and fearless heart, warm affections, and a tender compassionate disposition. Where his own safety was concerned, he was bold even to rashness; he neither disguised his thoughts, nor controuled his actions; where the interests or reputation of others were at stake, he was discreet, cautious, and considerate. When in England in 1797, he studiously avoided the society he loved best, from a fear that a knowledge of the dangerous transactions in which he was then engaged, might be inferred against his friends from any particular intercourse with him. Indignant as he was at the oppression of his country, and intemperate in his language of abhorrence at the cruel-

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ties exercised in Ireland, I never could find that there was a single man against whom he felt the slightest personal animosity. He made allowance for the motives, and even temptations, of those whose actions he detested. With the most unaffected simplicity and good nature, he would palliate, from the force of circumstances or the accident of situation, the perpetrators of the very enormities which had raised his high spirit and compassionate nature to conspire and to resist. It was this kindness of heart that led him, on his death bed, to acquit the officer who inflicted his wounds of all malice, and even to commend him for an honest discharge of his duty. It was this sweetness of disposition that enabled him to dismiss with good humour one of his bitterest persecutors, who had visited him in his mangled condition, if not to insult his misfortunes, with the idle hope of extorting his secret. "I would shake hands with you willingly (said he), but mine are cut to pieces; but,

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however, I'll shake a *toe*, and wish you good bye."

He was for some time concealed in Dublin, and was at last discovered in his bed, reading Gil Blas. After a forcible attack, and a spirited and bloody resistance, he was arrested on the 19th of May, 1798. He expired on the 5th of June, exhausted by a fever, the consequence of his wounds, and agitated with anxiety about the events which he knew must be passing, but which were carefully concealed from him. He saw his brother, Lord Henry, and his aunt, Lady Louisa Conolly, before his death, but Lord Clare was present, and nothing passed at the interview, but his expressions of gratitude for the kindness of his relations. Premature and ill-concerted insurrections followed in various parts of Ireland, but particularly in the Catholick districts. They were quelled, rather in consequence of want of concert and skill in the insurgents, than of any good conduct or discipline of the King's troops, whom Sir Ralph Abercromby described, very honestly, as *for-*

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midable to no one but their friends. That experienced and upright Commander had been removed from his command soon after those just and spirited general orders, in which the remarkable judgment just quoted was conveyed. His recall was hailed as a triumph by the Orange faction ; and they contrived about the same time to get rid of Mr. Secretary Pelham, who, though somewhat timeserving, was a goodnatured and prudent man. Indeed, surrounded as they were with burning cottages, tortured backs, and frequent executions, they were yet full of their sneers at what they whimsically termed the "clemency" of the Government, and the weak character of their Viceroy, Lord Camden. The propensity to exaggeration, common to all Irishmen, renders it extremely difficult to ascertain the exact truth as to any transaction in that country. And the incorrectness of those who have related the atrocities of 1797 and 1798, has thrown a discredit on all facts of that nature, especially in minds too indolent, or too selfish, to sift the

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evidence, or to express their abhorrence of the iniquities of the powerful; and therefore, most willingly to acquiesce in the comfortable belief that they never existed but in the imagination of declaimers. The fact, however, is incontrovertible that the people of Ireland were driven to resistance, which possibly they meditated before, by the free quarters and the excesses of the soldiery, which were such as are not permitted in civilised warfare, even in an enemy's country. Trials, if they must so be called, were carried on, without number, under Martial Law. It often happened that three officers composed the Court, and that of the three, two were under age, and the third an officer of the Yeomanry or Militia, who had sworn in his Orange Lodge eternal hatred to the people over whom he was thus constituted a judge. Floggings, picketings, death, were the usual sentences, and these were sometimes commuted into banishment, serving in the fleet, or transference to a foreign service. Many were sold at so much per head to

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the Prussians. Other less legal, but not more horrible, outrages were daily committed by the different corps under the command of Government. Even in the streets of Dublin, a man was shot and robbed of 30*l.* on the loose recollection of a soldier's having seen him in the battle of Kilcally, and no proceeding was instituted to ascertain the murder or prosecute the murderer. Lord Wycombe, who was in Dublin, and who was himself shot at by a sentinel between Black Rock and that city, wrote to me many details of similar outrages, which he had ascertained to be true. Dr. Dickson (Bishop of Downe) assured me that he had seen families returning peaceably from mass assailed, without provocation, by drunken troops and yeomanry, and the wives and daughters exposed to every species of indignity brutality, and outrage, from which neither his remonstrances, nor those of other Protestant gentlemen, could rescue them. The subsequent indemnity acts deprived of redress the victims of this wide-spread cruelty.

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Mr. Toler, who, under the name of Lord Norbury, afterwards discredited the Bench, brought in a bill to attaint Lord Edward Fitzgerald, Mr. Grogan, and Mr. Bagnall Hervey, after their deaths, and to inflict, by a specifick Act of Legislation, on their unoffending posterity or representatives, all the consequences which would have flowed from a regular trial, conviction, condemnation, and execution of their persons. The monstrous injustice of this bill, as well as the inaccuracy with which it was drawn up, were admirably exposed, and eloquently deprecated, in a petition to the King to put his negative, signed by the Duke of Richmond, Lord Henry Fitzgerald, Mr. Ogilvie, Mr. Fox, General Fox, and myself. It was drawn up by Mr. Piggott, and the materials supplied from his own resources of law and eloquence, were further enriched by the observations and reasonings contained in letters to me from Mr. Fox and the Duke of Richmond, which I transmitted to

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Mr. Piggott. I became better acquainted, during this correspondence, than I had hitherto been, with my relation, the Duke of Richmond. Accident or disgust had removed him from publick life before I came into it; and the only period at which he returned to it, was in 1804, when I was abroad. He was certainly one of the most remarkable men of his day. He united to the advantages of rank, a person and manner unusually graceful and engaging, and an understanding singularly acute. He had great capacity for business, and a still greater appetite for employing it. His publick principles were honest, and his defects flowed from anxiety to do every thing too well, not from indolence or indecision — faults infinitely more common in his station of life. As a speaker, he had no fluency. He was dry, close, and above all, pertinacious. His written compositions were also destitute of ornament, but perspicuous and correct. He had no imagination, but he had the sense not to affect what he did not possess, and the

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industry to improve what he had, to the greatest advantage. All his writings, private and publick, were remarkable for logical precision, for justness of thought, and correctness of language. He was little enough to be jealous of the superior talents of his nephew, Mr. Fox, and mortified at the notion of any inferiority to him. Possibly, too, his early prepossession against my grandfather, with whom he had had political differences, and possibly, some unpleasant occurrences of a private nature had estranged him. I have been assured by many, that he never loved Mr. Fox, and all testimonies concur in proving, that during their political connexion, Mr. Fox was attached to him, even to weakness. He had, however, been compelled, in 1783, by the general voice of the party, to consider the Duke of Portland as the successor of Lord Rockingham; a preference, never forgiven by the Duke of Richmond, and certainly not to be accounted for by any comparison of the respective talents of the two men. The

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truth is, that the strict and even captious attention to trifles, which distinguished the Duke of Richmond, estranged many individuals from him, and the singular tenacity of his temper, seldom unjust, but always vexatious, rendered him, with all his qualifications for business, and all his excellent principles, an unpopular and impracticable man. "He is," said Lord Chatham, "in opposition the most grievous man to a ministry that I ever knew." He was nearly as much so to any man with whom he differed on a trifle, or a detail. He had, some years before, been unreasonably exasperated with Lord Edward Fitzgerald for supporting his family interest, by coming into the Irish Parliament, for the county of Kildare, and, when there, voting with the Opposition for placing Mr. Ponsonby in the Speaker's chair. He was even active in promoting his brother-in-law, Colonel Strutt, over Lord Edward's head, in a manner as unusual as it was unhandsome. A recollection of these acts of unkindness quickened his sense of friendship, and his

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zeal to serve Lord Edward when in actual misfortune. He left no means unemployed; first to save him from arrest, then to rescue him from the consequences, and lastly, to protect his widow and children from spoliation and injustice. Lord Clare, whom I suspect of having originally suggested the Attainder Bill, acted a very inconsistent, or a very false, part during its progress. He spoke of it to the family with concern, and even with disapprobation, but deprecated all publick opposition, especially in England. He talked mysteriously about future repeal or compensation, and thus stifled that exposure of its iniquity which would have ensued, had it been discussed in the British Parliament. He did, however, convey early intelligence of the design to the relations, and enabled them to buy up a mortgage on the estate, by which the wrecks of it were saved for Lord Edward's descendants. Hints were given, even from a higher quarter, that some mitigation might be obtained by silence. Neither Mr. Fox nor myself gave

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much credit to this, but in compliance with the wishes of others, we confined our efforts to the Petition, and neither printed the paper, nor brought the proceeding, in any way into parliamentary discussion. Indeed, I prevailed on Lansdowne not to bring it on, as he was desirous of doing. He complied very reluctantly. "As to the insinuations you mention," (said he, in a letter to Miss Fox,) "it is an old trick in a certain quarter, and would not weigh a straw with me, if it depended on me to decide. However, if your brother wishes me not, from regard to him, I will not say a word on the subject, till a proper opening comes; otherwise, it was my fixed intention to call the attention of the publick, as soon as possible, to it (without reference, however, to the Petition) as a most alarming precedent, and one which must be stigmatised and guarded against." The reason for enforcing the most odious consequences of punishment for guilt, on which the grave had closed, and of which no *legal* proofs could therefore be brought,

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was particularly striking, when at the same moment, the Government of Ireland was extending their pardon to persons avowedly guilty, and still alive with the purpose of procuring disclosures. The conditions on which these disclosures were made, were afterwards violated by Government, upon the flimsy pretext of Humbert's invasion. Few, however, pitied Mr. Arthur O'Connor. He had betrayed at Maidstone an anxiety for his own personal safety, hardly honourable to any man, and quite unpardonable in one who had involved others, as well as himself, in very dangerous transactions. What passed at Maidstone exposed the Opposition to much calumny. Arthur O'Connor had, without scruple, summoned all his acquaintances in that party, to speak to his character. From pardonable motives of humanity and friendship, they endeavoured to give the most favourable colour they could, to his views and opinions about England, and they thereby exposed themselves to the imputation of being implicated in the plot,

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or at least accessory to the designs which he soon afterwards confessed. As to the specifick charge, there was certainly not sufficient proof against him. O'Coigley, with whom he had fallen in by accident, furnished the only evidence, in a paper which he imprudently carried about him, and which was, to the full, as remarkable for its uselessness and nonsense as for its treason. The poor man, feeling that he had thus endangered the companions of his journey, generously entreated them to sacrifice him without scruple, if in any way it could contribute to their defence. With this request, Mr. O'Connor religiously complied, and even the Counsel and the Judge himself seemed, by a tacit compact, to acquiesce in a sort of compromise which condemned O'Coigley and acquitted the others. Yet even O'Coigley was condemned on false and contradictory evidence. I do not mean to aver, as Lord Thurlow assured me that he did to Judge Baker, who tried him, that "if ever a poor man was murdered, it was O'Coigley," but

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simply to allude to a circumstance which, in the case of a common felon, would probably have saved his life. The Bow Street officer who swore to finding the fatal paper in his pocket-book, and remarked in court the folding of the paper as fitting that pocket-book, had sworn, before the privy council, that the same paper was found loose in O'Coigley's great coat, and, I think, had added, that he himself had put it into the pocket-book. An attorney of the name of Foulkes gave me this information, and I went with it to Mr. Wickham, then, I think, Under Secretary, who assured me that the circumstance should be carefully and anxiously investigated before the execution; but the order had gone down, and while we were conversing, the sentence was probably executed. Mr. Wickham's general good character, and the good opinion which subsequent acquaintance has given me of his humanity, make it just to add, that I acquit him of the hypocrisy of expressing interest about the fate of a man who was

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no more; and I suppose that he thought there was yet time for a respite and investigation. O'Coigley, who was a priest, showed great unconcern about his own life, but was not indifferent about the cause in which he suffered. When Judge Baker in passing judgment, enlarged, in commonplace eloquence, on the mercy and virtues of George III., the poor man, with great composure, but with a smile of contempt, took a pinch of snuff, and cried "Hem." On the scaffold, he made some disgusting protestations of his innocence, from a persuasion, no doubt, that a denial of the facts rendered more service to the cause than the open avowal of the design for which he suffered.

On the seizure of O'Connor after acquittal, upon a fresh charge and a new warrant, a riot ensued. It was the result of feeling and indignation, not of concert or design. The new warrant was, indeed, known to his friends; and his seizure was expected before the termination of the trial. The more violent of his friends

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consulted on the possibility of effecting a rescue. In that consultation, Mr. Dennis O'Brien, who has some of the virtues and all the failings of his countrymen, exposed the impropriety, imprudence, and danger of such a step, so successfully, that it was unanimously abandoned. When, however, the Bow Street officer stepped forward to seize his prey, the sight of the man in whose fate they had that day taken so warm an interest, and indignation at the conversion of a triumph at his acquittal into fresh compassion for his sufferings, overcame all considerations of prudence in some hot and generous minds. Mr. G. Smith, a barrister, who has since filled some judicial situation in our colonies, moved his arm adroitly to intercept the officer, on which Dennis O'Brien, forgetful of his own admonitions in the cool hour of deliberation, pressed earnestly forward, and was the first to violate the rule which he had laid down for his friends. All was instant confusion. Had Arthur O'Connor possessed presence

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of mind, he might have escaped; but he showed as little promptitude in avoiding danger, as he had shown firmness in meeting it during his trial.

The riot became the subject of a prosecution in the King's Bench; D. O'Brien was acquitted; Lord Thanet and Mr. Ferguson were convicted, and Mr. G. Smith was not even indicted, though he wished to come forward, and avow his share in the business, which the witnesses of the Crown had manifestly transferred, with many other things belonging to neither, to Mr. Ferguson. Lord Thanet, who has as much honour and pride as any man, as well as more sound sense and wit than most, is incapable of falsehood, subterfuge, or evasion. The declaration which he read in court is therefore to be relied on implicitly. His conviction was owing to the hardihood in swearing of the Bow Street officers, to the intemperate partiality of Lord Kenyon, and to the vanity of Sheridan, who endeavoured to convert a witness box into a

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theatre for wit and repartee. Some, indeed, thought his motives yet less excusable, and Lord Thanet sarcastically related at Brooks' that his attorney, when asked why he had not examined Sheridan sooner, answered "that he kept him for the last, when he should know what was necessary to be said." He certainly boasted in his cups that he had got off O'Brien, and that his chief object was to save him. On the verdict given, Lord Thanet, in strict law, would have lost his arm, and forfeited his landed property in the South to the Chapter of Westminster. He was prevailed upon, against his better judgment, to write to the King for a remission of that part of the sentence, and thus gave Government the opportunity of taking merit to themselves for a favour which they could not possibly have withheld. The perjury on which he was convicted was notorious, and his agreeable qualities fully account for the sensation produced by his imprisonment; yet it was impossible not to remark, with disgust,

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the comparative indifference with which the far more flagrant injustice done to Mr. Ferguson was regarded by the political and fashionable society in London.

On the arrest of O'Connor, I had hastily and foolishly gone down to the House of Lords to complain of the proceeding. On examination, I was not satisfied of its illegality, though Mr. St. John, in the Commons, in a very learned and well-reasoned speech, made out a much better case against Government than I imagined the state of the law would have enabled him to do. In relating the above transactions, I have not observed the order of time. The trials at Maidstone were before the insurrection in Ireland and the arrest of Lord Edward Fitzgerald; and before the Attainder Bill had passed into law, Mr. O'Connor, already in prison a second time, had agreed to disclose the whole conspiracy. The events in Ireland had so exasperated Mr. Fox, that he told me and others that his opinions on the subject were "neither fit to be spoken in publick nor even to be written in private."

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As to England, he never believed in the probability of invasion, and thought the offers of service made by many of his friends gave too much countenance to the delusions practised by Ministry on the people. "If," says he, in a letter to me of April 1798, "Sheridan goes to the House, and the Duke of Bedford, Grey, and others, make their offers of service, I expect to be finely abused; but I am grown to mind that very little where I am quite sure that I am in the right."

The manner in which the offer of the Duke of Bedford was rejected, seemed to justify his view of this question. Ministry passed a slight on one of the first men of the country, and thereby gave currency to imputations which they knew to be false at a time when their truth would have been highly injurious to the country. The rejection of the Duke of Bedford's proffer of service gave great umbrage to many powerful men, and was far from popular with the people; but it gratified some little minds, as well as the personal animosity of

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Mr. Pitt, who always affected great contempt for the Duke of Bedford, and did not in truth much love the class to which he belonged. He and other Anti-Jacobins exulted in the notion of having in one year insulted and lowered the three great houses of Russell, Percy, and Howard. The Duke of Northumberland, who was now utterly disabled by the gout, and who at the commencement of the war had served in a very fatiguing campaign as a volunteer in the Pyrenees, was on the pretence of the invasion called upon to join his militia or resign the command of it, as if the rank and name of a colonel of militia was not of greater importance than his presence and activity. The Duke of Norfolk was dismissed from his Lord-lieutenancy of the West Riding, in consequence of an imprudent toast at the Crown and Anchor, upon Mr. Fox's birth-day. The Reformers, or as they were more injuriously called, the Jacobins, and Mr. Horne Tooke, attended the celebration of that day for the first time. The Duke of Norfolk, who was in

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the chair, hearing that two thousand persons were present at dinner, observed, in giving the health of Mr. Fox, that the same number first rallied round another great man, General Washington. "That man," added his Grace, "established the liberties of his countrymen: I leave it to you, gentlemen, to make the application, and I give you the health of Mr. Fox:"—loud peals of applause followed the speech. The Duke, alarmed at the warmth of the approbation, endeavoured by many moderate speeches and loyal toasts to efface the impression. He laboured this point in vain; but towards the close of the evening he again awakened the languid attention of the company by a toast, defensible in itself, but peculiarly offensive at that time to the ears of power, by the associations it excited, —"The People, our Sovereign." He was dismissed from the lieutenancy, and Lord Fitzwilliam condescended to accept it, preferring on that occasion the gratification of an old resentment, to the feelings which recent injuries were likely to inspire. The

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Rockingham ministry had intended to confer the Lord-lieutenancy upon him; but on that minister's death, the Duke of Norfolk, then Lord Surrey, supported Lord Shelburne for a time, during which he picked up this lieutenancy, and a few other little matters, which secured his interest in Gloucester. He returned however, shortly, with the booty which he had collected during his excursion, to the camp to which he somewhat reluctantly was doomed for life to belong; and to which, though occasionally a straggler, he by his name, talents, influence, and popularity, contributed very important support.

It was not less in the spirit of Mr. Fox's policy than of his temper, to take and even to seek for his share of any odium which the rash zeal of a friend might incur in the common cause. On this occasion he was more particularly stimulated to such a course by two considerations: 1st, "It was in doing honour to him that the Duke of Norfolk had offended the Government: 2nd, The principle of the sovereignty of the

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people formed, in his view of the subject, the most advantageous line of demarcation to distinguish the two parties in the country, as it is impossible to support the Revolution and the Brunswick succession upon any other ground."* He accordingly attended the Whig Club, and in the tersest speech he perhaps ever delivered, vindicated the sovereignty of the people, and deduced from it, and from it alone, the right of the present family to the throne, the justification of our ancestors, and the truth of the most popular and best received maxims of our mixed constitution. He gratified the Duke of Norfolk by this speech, and exasperated the Court, who struck him out of the Privy Council, though His Majesty was compelled in the course of eight years to replace him there, without exacting any retraction of principle or abjuration of allegiance to that Sovereign whom Mr. Fox acknowledged, and from whom George the Third himself derived the power of dismissing or replacing him,—namely, the People.

* Letter to Lord Lauderdale, February 4. 1798.

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In the course of the Session of 1798 I had little opportunity of exercising the talent of speaking which is so necessary to a publick man in this country, and which depends upon practice as much, or even more, than any other. I aimed soon afterwards at another, and imitated in verse two Satires of Juvenal, into which, if I infused little of the poetry, I forced at least much of the bitterness of the original. The first was entitled Secession; the other, the Yeoman: the latter, on the excesses of the soldiery, was addressed to Lord Wycombe, then resident in Ireland, but was not printed till the summer of 1799. Lord Cornwallis had by that time assumed the government of that country, and my verses bear testimony to the benevolence of his views. He certainly deserved much higher praise than any eloquence or poetry of mine could bestow, though he perhaps tarnished it by the means and tools he employed to accomplish the Union. He found in June, 1799, a country distracted by the fiercest passions, misgoverned by a sangui-

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nary and triumphant faction, and exposed at the same time with an incompetent and disorderly rabble, called an army, to an able and enterprising foe. The landing of Humbert with a small force, furnished him with a fortunate pretext for correcting the last evil; he was enabled to postpone any attack till he had disciplined his forces. With this view he submitted to the hardest trial a general or publick man has to encounter,—that of appearing negligent of his duty, and insensible to the wishes of the people, the interests of the country, and the calls of glory itself. He heard, unmoved, the lamentations of friends, and the taunts of enemies who could discern, at the time, nothing in his campaign but delay, caution, and timidity before a force not only inferior, but insignificantly small. But while he was laughed at for out-manœuvring, with all the pedantry of a tactician, twelve hundred men, with as many thousands, and while he was bitterly censured for exposing whole districts to the plunder of a contemptible handful of men, he was silently com-

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bating and extirpating those enemies whom his predecessor, General Abercrombie, had stigmatised as formidable to the country, viz., the disorder and insubordination of an army, the profligacy, cruelty, and negligence of the officers. This singular campaign, and the descent, conduct, and final surrender of the French, are related in a simple, yet lively pamphlet of Dr. Stock, Bishop of Killala. He himself fell into the hands of the invaders, and he draws a very spirited picture of a town and district in the power of an enemy, describing, without reserve and without exaggeration, the sensations of a man unused to such scenes, on the various events which occurred in the neighbourhood. This pamphlet was little noticed at the time, and some pains were taken to deprive it of the celebrity to which it was entitled. Many were offended that republican Frenchmen should be described, and that by a bishop too, as they really were, and not as it had suited the purposes of ministerialists to represent them, —monsters of impiety, treachery, and inhu-

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manity. Dr. Stock was never promoted, and this publication was, it is said, urged as an objection — when Mr. Fox, however, in 1806, considered it as an additional recommendation to his acknowledged learning for translating him to a better bishoprick, other reasons were found to counteract his liberal intentions. After the surrender of Humbert, the Victory of the Nile, the expectation of renewed hostilities on the Continent, and a variety of other circumstances restored some strength and confidence in Government, and Lord Cornwallis was enabled more openly to discountenance the system of oppression in which the ruling factions in Ireland had been indulged. The project of a Union had, no doubt, been in his contemplation when he accepted the Lord-lieutenancy, and though obnoxious to all classes in Ireland, many imagined that it was the only mode of healing the many wounds which civil discord had inflicted on that country. In the view of Lord Cornwallis, however, it was sooner or later to be combined with a removal

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of all disabilities on account of religion. To all these views, and indeed, to any other which Government might entertain, the supple genius of Lord Castlereagh lent itself with as much readiness as it had to the dissemination of Paine's pamphlet in the north, and to the praises of Lord Fitzwilliam, in 1795.

Mr. Secretary Cook was employed to start the project in a pamphlet. Under the garb of moderation and doubt, he insinuated the advantages of a Union, and described the difficulties (no small ones, it must be acknowledged) which hung over the prospect of any government in Ireland. All parties received the mention of a Union with dislike, some with abhorrence, but the violence expressed by those persons who were most hateful to the people, at the prospect of such a measure, if it did not reconcile, at least softened the opposition of the Roman Catholicks to it; what mortified, displeased, and alarmed their persecutors, could not, they thought, be very injurious to their interests or happiness. The proposal was re-

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jected by no inconsiderable majority in the Irish Parliament in January, 1799. Pitt, however, resolved to persist; and Lord Cornwallis was prevailed upon to engage with Lord Castlereagh and his agents in a system of intrigue, cajolery, and corruption very different from the arts of government, which had raised his reputation in India, and which he had hitherto practised in Ireland. Mr. Pitt found little difficulty in pledging the English Parliament to the measure. He was, however, extremely irritable throughout that Session, and he shone less as an orator on the discussions on the Union than on those of any measure that could be called his own. Lord Lansdowne, who had scarcely ever attended a debate in the House of Commons, was present at his speech on this occasion, and was disappointed with his eloquence, which, strange to say, he had never had the curiosity of hearing before; his remark on it was singular,—"There's a great deal of gout in his speech." It certainly was not well calculated to reconcile the Irish to the

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Union; so little so, that it was reprinted and circulated by a committee who managed the opposition to that measure. It was, I think, in this same Session of Parliament that, on some question relating to the Income Tax, he insulted old Sir William Pulteney, to whom he had many and great obligations, by observing that, "when he had devised a large plan to assist the finances of the country, he would not be diverted from his purpose by the 'peevish cavils of any old woman who dealt in scraps and rags in detail.'" "I shall not easily forget that speech," said Sir William, as he left the lobby; and, in the subsequent administration of Mr. Addington, the vindictive old miser opened his house and was lavish of his money to secure a final separation from Pitt and his exclusion from power. Mr. Pitt's irritability to Mr. Tierney was near involving more fatal consequences. Mr. Tierney, I have been told, annexed a meaning to Mr. Pitt's words which they were not meant to convey; but the latter's imperious manner of refusing all

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explanation, when called upon by a member (Mr. Wigley), made it difficult for Mr. Tierney not to resent his language. The circumstances of the duel are well known. It was fought on a Sunday, a circumstance which gave a handle to much vulgar abuse against Mr. Pitt. He did, indeed, urge the necessity of fighting immediately if at all, because it was not proper for one in his situation to maintain any protracted correspondence on such a subject. Never did two men meet more ignorant of the use of their weapons. Mr. Pitt, on being cautioned by his second to take care of his pistols, as they were "hair triggers," is said to have held them up, and remarked that "he saw no hair." They fought near a gibbet on which the body of the malefactor Abershaw was yet suspended; and I have been assured by a person*, whom anxiety about the event, of which he had been apprised, had drawn to the place, that in a gravel pit within a few yards of the ground, an assignation of a very different

* Lord Grey.

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sort between a lover and a compliant mistress completed this group of human life. Mr. Tierney's second, General Walpole, leaped over the furze bushes for joy when Mr. Pitt fired in the air. Some time, however, elapsed, and some discussion between the seconds took place, before the affair was finally and amicably adjusted. Mr. Pitt very consistently insisted on one condition, which was in itself reasonable, that he was not to quit the ground without the whole matter being completely terminated. On Mr. Tierney's return home, he related the event to his wife. That lady, who was much attached to her husband, although she saw him safe before her, fainted away at the relation; a strange but not uncommon effect produced by the discovery of events which, known at the time, would have excited strong emotions. The danger to Mr. Tierney had indeed been great. Had Mr. Pitt fallen, the fury of the times would probably have condemned him to exile or death, without reference to the provocation which he had received, and to the sanction

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which custom had given to the redress he sought.

Mr. Fox never attended on the question of Union in Parliament; he expressed his hostility to it in the Whig Club, and he urged on myself and others in private the objections he felt both to its principles and its policy. Indeed, he not only approved warmly of the protest which, with the assistance of Mr. Piggott, I drew up and entered in the journals, but he wished me to question the right and competency of Parliament. I was not myself satisfied of the soundness of that ground of opposition, and I avoided it. Mr. Fox, however, took at that time very little interest in publick affairs. He renewed his Greek studies and his other literary pursuits with redoubled ardour; and while his enemies represented him as the victim of disappointed ambition, he, with unaffected philosophy, was endeavouring to reconcile his reason to his inclinations, and to justify that measure for which he panted—a complete retirement from publick life. A conjecture that he

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might yet be instrumental in obtaining peace was his chief motive for remaining in Parliament; he more than once assured his intimate friends, that if the calls upon him to attend were frequent, he should apply for the Chiltern Hundreds, and leave politics for ever. With the exception of Mr. Grey, no member of Opposition was equally observant of his principles of secession. Even the Duke of Bedford spoke upon the Income Tax; he could hardly be said to attend it, for he entered the House when the question was about to be put, rose immediately, and having finished a long and able speech, huddled up his notes and papers, and walked away, without even resuming the seat from which he had risen. This conduct produced one very ludicrous effect. Lord Loughborough rose to reply to him: he had turned some sarcastic periods in his head, but when he was preparing to deliver them after his method, in the attitude of pointing at the individual against whom they were directed, he looked to right, to left, and over his shoulder in vain, and was

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at last compelled to inveigh against an absent man without the studied graces of which he thought so much, and which during the latter years of his life constituted the chief merit of his oratory. The Duke of Bedford, always clear, and sometimes powerful, was not a lively speaker. He was equally emphatic and equally long on all parts of his subject. Deficient in wit and imagination, though wonderful in fluency, it was by perspicuity of statement and solidity of argument alone that he could arrest the attention of his audience. These merits attract little favour except when applied to the leading points of the question. He had, too, another great defect; he always seemed to treat the understandings of his adversaries with contempt, and the decision and even the good will of the audience which he addressed with utter indifference. Such were the imperfections of a man whose excellent disposition and strong understanding had enabled him to surmount an education of indulgence and neglect, and who, though he had never been contradicted, and at the

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age of twenty-four had scarcely ever opened a book, was, in the course of a few months, capable of discussing, unprepared, subjects, great in their consequences and complicated in their details, with the ablest statesmen in the country, and of inspiring political parties with confidence in his judgment and integrity, Parliament and people with respect for his talents and esteem for his person. His heart was affectionate, and he joined to all these qualifications great firmness of mind and the purest simplicity of manners that I ever knew. No man's conversation was so sure an indication of his feelings and thoughts; he was truth itself, sometimes too naked, and possibly sometimes disagreeable, but always plain, undisguised truth and real benevolence. Mr. Sheridan attended on the Union, and spoke against it with his usual wit, eloquence, and effect. He was vain enough, however, to boast of his imaginary descent from Irish kings, and even to allege that circumstance as a personal motive with him for opposing the surrender of the independence of Ireland.

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He was, he said, a "true old *Milesian*," which Mr. Hare explained to be a member of "Miles's," the gaming club in St. James Street.

Lord Lansdowne was embarrassed with the question of the Union. In his speech he enlarged, in glowing terms and at greater detail than was usual with him, on the advantages of union, in church, in state, in army, in navy, in commerce, and in finance. Lord Grenville bowed assent to all his propositions, beat time to his periods, and loudly cheered his declarations; when, at the close of his oration, after avowing himself, as he said, unequivocally for a Union, he added, that there was one thing however, which he could not prevail on himself to approve, or even to harbour an idea of, and that was "bringing the two parliaments together." The ministerial cheers suddenly dropped, and Lord Lansdowne burst forth into one of the most eloquent invectives I ever heard him pronounce, against the whole conduct of the Irish parliament for twenty years, stigma-

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tizing all their acts, and especially the spoliation of Lord Edward Fitzgerald's innocent children, as base, servile, barbarous, inhuman, and unprincipled.

Ministers supported by the English parliament proceeded in the work which they had undertaken, and relaxed no endeavours during the summer of 1799 in bribing some and intimidating others of their Irish opponents. The Roman Catholicks were prevailed upon, if not by promises expressed, by expectations carefully encouraged, to concur in a measure which their most inveterate enemies disliked. Some of the firmest among their Protestant friends, and the Hutchinsons especially, after a period of hesitation, consented to support the measure. They were reconciled to it by a persuasion artfully instilled into their minds, that a complete admission of Catholicks to all their rights would ultimately form part of that otherwise obnoxious measure.

In the meanwhile the war on the Continent had been rekindled. The victory of Lord Nelson at Aboukir had inspired the

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Austrians with courage and with hopes. The irregular and despotic mind of the Emperor of Russia, Paul, had taken alarm at Republicanism, and the suspicious circumstances attending the murder of the French deputies at Radstadt had very reasonably roused indignation in every corner of France. The French armies were indeed disorganised; their troops were enervated and corrupted with the plunder and luxury of Italy, and their most successful generals removed by exile, death, or distant service. The confederacy was strengthened by the cordial accession of Russia,—a power high in the estimation of the world, from the dread with which it had always inspired Frederick, King of Prussia, the extent of its territory, and the unknown state of its resources. The commencement of the campaign answered all these expectations; our sanguine politicians thought it argued disaffection to look at the other side of the picture — the advantages of the military possession of Switzerland, the distance of St. Petersburgh, the very imperfect

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organisation of Russian armies, the probable jealousies between the two imperial courts, and above all, the indistinct and contradictory objects of the War. Mr. Pitt was elated beyond all measure at the rapid successes in Italy of that singular barbarian, Suwarrow. So confident was he of a counter-revolution at Paris, that when an inference of Sieyes's good opinion of the state of things was drawn from his acceptance of a seat in the Directory, and his departure from Berlin to assume it, Mr. Pitt replied that he would probably arrive there in time to be hanged. Yet the dread of the Russians gradually diminished with their novelty; the jealousy of Austria increased, and the aptitude of Frenchmen for all military attainments enabled their armies to resume their steadiness and discipline even in the hour of retreat, and in the face of discomfiture. Each victory was more dearly bought than the preceding. The French general, Joubert (who was designated for the dictator or consulship by the party who afterwards created Bonaparte), was killed

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by a "dubious hand" at the battle of Novi. That great action brought the French back to an equality with their enemies, and prepared them for the more decided triumphs which rapidly ensued. The exaggerated dread of a Russian army, very naturally founded on Frederick II.'s apprehensions, and the flattery of authors and travellers to the late Empress Catharine, was dispelled at least for a season. In spite of their courage and their numbers they were found deficient in organisation, intelligence, and mutual confidence. It is true that the Allies claimed the victory of that bloody day, and perhaps they gained it: but the loss at which it was purchased, and the masterly conduct of General Moreau, who magnanimously assisted the general who had superseded him, and did his utmost to improve the result of a battle which he had dissuaded, effectually disconcerted the plan of campaign which the combined armies had pursued. The high tone of the belligerent cabinets was not, however, lowered; and the English Government cherished hopes as preposterous

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as ever. In an early period of the session, which had been very unusually called in September, I made, against the advice of my friends, but with the cordial approbation of Mr. Fox, a motion for peace. The news of the great battle of Zurich arrived while I was speaking. Few days elapsed before the expedition to Holland under the Duke of York terminated in an ignominious capitulation. This failure was occasioned by many causes; the delay of General Abercrombie after taking the Helder, the consequence, it was alleged, of positive instructions from home, the rawness of the militia drafts, the original badness of the whole plan, and the incapacity of the royal commander. Strong suspicions were entertained that the operations had been suspended after the first landing that the triumph of entering Amsterdam might be reserved for the Duke of York; he was to receive 40,000*l.* as a reward for his success. That sum was certainly furnished to him, in defiance of law, from the Civil List; and the publick, two years afterwards, defrayed

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the charge in the still more exceptionable shape of debts on the Civil List. In the ensuing February I moved for an inquiry into the causes of the failure. I had hardly given notice, when Mr. Sheridan gave notice of a similar motion in the Commons, and fixed a day preceding that which I had named. He came over to Holland House, and procured from me all the materials which I had collected, and which he used without scruple. He even repeated, word for word, and like a lesson, a long paper which had been confidentially communicated to me, and which I, won by his protestations of not divulging it, had imprudently entrusted to him. Such petty tricks, as traits of a singular character, may be worth preserving; but it is right to add, that the fascination of his conversation and the mixture of archness and good-humour with which he defended himself when detected or attacked for such artifices, made all who knew him, and many whom he injured in more important matters than such trifles as these, in some measure his

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accomplices by forgiving, winking at, and encouraging his great and his little delinquencies.

The debates which I have mentioned did not take place till February; but the interval had been marked by many important events abroad, and by some remarkable discussions at home. General Bonaparte had returned from Egypt, been received with enthusiasm in the Departments, and raised, by the circumstances of the times, the machinations of Sieyes, and the necessity of a revolution, to the first station in France by the events in Paris of the 18th Brumaire, or 9th November, 1799. The State unquestionably required a new organisation, and General Bonaparte reframed it (said Mr. Fox, with his usual simplicity and sagacity), "as military men are apt to do, by taking all the power into his own hands." He immediately made an overture of peace in a letter to the King of England. That step made him popular in Europe; and if he was insincere in the offer, our haughty and offensive repulse gave him all the ad-

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vantage which he could expect to derive from his insincerity. It removed from his government to that of England the reproach of continuing the war without necessity. Publick report attributed the rejection of the overture, as well as the ill-judged and offensive terms in which it was conveyed, to Lord Grenville. He certainly was the author of the paper, and I suspect, in some measure, of the advice on which it was founded. I have heard, and I believe, that Mr. Pitt had actually drawn up a different and more favourable answer. Lord Grenville told Mr. Fox some years afterwards, that his object was to please the Emperor Paul. If absurdity and unreasonableness were a sure road to the favour of an absurd and unreasonable man, he would, no doubt, have had some rational grounds for his expectations: but he knew, even then, that Paul had some estrangement from England, and had expressed it on more than one publick occasion. The silly hope of recovering the precarious and tottering friendship of a mad and irritable tyrant, seems but a

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sorry excuse for rejecting all means of negotiation, and insulting an able general* placed at the head of the most powerful country of the Continent. Many who sanctioned the measure by their votes at the time, censured it in their hearts; and all acknowledged soon afterwards, that they bitterly lamented it. Mr. Fox was strongly urged to attend the debate on the rejection of this overture. As he was told from many quarters that great doubts of the propriety of the step, and even some disposition to call for peace existed in the publick, he could not refuse the urgent entreaties of his friends. He quitted the country, however, with great reluctance; stipulated for remaining at Holland House only two nights, and, when he heard that the debate was postponed in consequence of Mr. Pitt's indisposition, sat silent and overcome, as if the intelligence of some great calamity had

* Σχετλιε, τιπτ' ἐθελεις ἐρεθιζεμεν ἀγριον ἀνδρα, was the line quoted by Phocion to Demosthenes; and the same question might well have been put to Lord Grenville in 1800.

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reached his ears. I saw tears steal down his cheeks, so vexed was he at being detained from his garden, his books, and his cheerful life in the country.

The business came on first in the Lords. I had to undergo the severe trial of speaking when my uncle was in the House; he laughed at me for my hurry and my notes, and bade me be less scrupulous about rounding my sentences, and correcting my English: to these three circumstances he ascribed the hesitation which then obscured, and still continues to disfigure, my delivery. He was very attentive to the debate in the Lords, and answered the arguments which he then heard, in a speech which he afterwards delivered in the House of Commons. His exposure of the policy of "pausing" before we negotiated for peace, as Lord Carnarvon recommended, is perhaps one of the finest specimens of his oratory for argument, for feeling, for pleasantry, and for animation, that has been preserved. He told me, as we walked down to the House of Commons, that he never spoke without nervousness,

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and that he felt an unusual degree of it that day. "I should be sorry, however," he added, "if it were to spoil my speech to-day, for I should not wonder if it were to be the last I shall ever make in Parliament." He never spoke better; though, as if to justify his forebodings, he did at one moment come to a dead stop, lose the thread of his argument, and begin again upon another branch of the subject: he seldom spoke so much in unison with the real opinions of his audience, and yet he divided in a minority of 64!

Mr. Pitt continued to cherish hopes of success on the Continent. He shut his ears to all information or facts that could lead to an opposite conclusion.

The preparations at Dijon were the scoff of Mr. Canning and of his Anti-Jacobin friends, and in a rhetorical preface, and some very flippant and illiberal notes on the intercepted correspondence, that gentleman or Mr. Gifford boasted "that the idol of France tottered on his throne." When therefore, Mr. Chauvel, a Swiss gentleman

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long established in this country, waited on Mr. Pitt with a curious letter from Neufchatel, containing the state of equipments, provisions, and arms, the name of the commander, the numbers of the regiments, and the amount of the forces at Dijon, he with a glance of his eye perceiving them to be rated higher than his wishes, returned the paper, and with a sneer observed that the motive of the communication was no doubt most friendly, but that he was afraid Mr. Chauvel had a very Jacobinical correspondent at Neufchatel. In the same spirit he had at the commencement of the war given no credit to the official papers stolen by Mr. Bertrand, Minister of Marine, from the office, because the report of stores was larger than that which he derived from his own spies and informants. On the possession of Toulon, the papers of Bertrand turned out to be accurate to the minutest particular. The army at Dijon was soon afterwards sufficient to gain the decisive battle of Marengo, the protracted defence of Genoa by Massena having given it full time for

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its formation, discipline, and march. It was said that after Genoa had been repeatedly summoned, an Austrian officer persuading Massena to capitulate, urged as an argument that they were compelled to eat their horses, and were reduced to the last extremities; and that Massena with a smile pointed to a fat monk under the window and said, "Comment aux extremités ? Nous n'avons pas commencé encore sur ces Gaillards là." When asked by Mr. Fox at Paris, if there were truth in the anecdote, he replied, "Effectivement il peut y en avoir eu quelque chose."

The battle of Marengo, and the victories subsequent to the strange disavowal of St. Julien, not only led to a separate peace between France and Austria, but no doubt determined the conduct of the English ministry on matters more connected with our domestick concerns—of that conduct hereafter. In the meantime the Act of Union passed both houses of Parliament, but not till after repeated debates. Lord Lansdowne, when it was carried in Ire-

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land, complimented the Ministers, and extolled the measure. Others in the Commons, and I in the Lords, offered to waive all opposition if the disabilities on account of religious opinions were removed, in any part of the bill. I went further: of my own accord, and without communication with the Roman Catholicks, or consultation with my friends, I moved an instruction to the committee to take the laws creating those disabilities into consideration, with a view of modifying or repealing them. The motion was not directly rejected. Lord Boringdon proposed the previous question, and at the instance of Lord Moira, against my wishes and my judgment, I forbore to divide the House; the debate, unfollowed by a division, attracted little notice in the publick. It has since been entirely forgotten. Yet it created some embarrassment to Government. The Anti-Catholick or exclusionist faction were startled at such a proposition being civilly dismissed by a previous question. That mode of proceeding implies nothing more in par-

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liamentary construction than that the season for division on the matter propounded is not arrived. Lord Hobart *, who had declared in debate that although he voted for the previous question, he foresaw *no* season in which it would be proper to entertain, much less *safe* to grant the proposal, solicited an interview with Mr. Pitt. He there urged the apprehensions which the method of dealing with my motion had raised in his mind. He stated his repugnance to any further concessions to Irish Roman Catholicks to be so strong

* Lord Hobart, on his return from India, had been recently called up by writ to the House of Lords. He was the son of Lord Buckinghamshire, whom he succeeded in his titles, and the brother-in-law of Lord Guildford, from whom I received the account related in the text. Lord Hobart afterwards confirmed the substance of my relation, for he assured me that both he and Lord Clare had been deceived by Mr. Pitt, and that he would have voted against the Union, had he suspected at the time that it was connected with any project of extending the concessions already made to the Irish Catholicks. The present Lord Clare's report of his father's views of the whole matter, tallies with this account of the transaction.

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as to preclude him from voting for any measure intended to promote them, and from supporting any minister who entertained such views; and he conjured Mr. Pitt to tell him frankly, whether, such being his sentiments, he could consistently vote for his measure of Union with Ireland, which, if unconnected with Catholick Emancipation he approved. Mr. Pitt cautiously concealed his own views or opinions, and somewhat drily replied that he thought Lord Hobart might support the great measure recommended to Parliament by His Majesty, and which he learnt with pleasure that his lordship approved, "with a perfectly safe conscience:" subsequent events proved that this mysterious and indirect policy of Mr. Pitt was less conducive to his secret, but just and wise, designs, than a more manly and open avowal of them. When the Union had passed, his endeavours to engraft concession to the Roman Catholicks upon it, though urged in the closet with much firmness and ability, proved abortive. The Union itself for twenty-nine

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years (that is * till the Catholick question passed) continued a hindrance rather than a help to all good government in Ireland.

I have dwelt on the effects, however fleeting and unimportant, of my motion in 1793, because I think that it showed the true line of conduct which Prince and Parliament ought to have pursued at the time; and I perhaps indulge a little pardonable complacency in reminding my reader that the great measure, commonly called Catholick Emancipation, which so many of its inveterate opponents were driven to adopt in 1829, was first moved in the House of Lords by the writer of these pages.

In the summer of 1800 I made an excursion to the North of Germany, and returned in the autumn through the Netherlands and France. There was then in force a severe and absurd statute against traitorous

* It is unnecessary to remark that after I had written this account of my motion on the Union, about 1805, and transcribed it in 1824, I revised and added to the passage. The allusion to subsequent events sufficiently proves that I did so.

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correspondence, by which heavy penalties attached to any voluntary visit to places within the jurisdiction of the French republick. Having, however, procured passports through General Beurnonville and M. de la Valette, French ministers at Berlin and Dresden, and having seen a letter from Lord Grenville to Lord Carysport, in which the former said that he foresaw no objection to my return through the enemy's country, provided I avoided Paris; I ventured without further authority, and without receiving an official answer to my application to the Duke of Portland, to set off on my journey. It was lucky for my convenience that I did so. The Duke of Portland's answer, addressed to Lord Ossery, did not reach me till I had accomplished my purpose and returned to England. It was a long, tiresome, and lumbering dissertation between compliance and refusal, which would have puzzled and embarrassed me extremely. On my arrival, however, at Dover, he felt, or was probably told by his colleagues, that he could not withhold

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from me his permission to land. It would have implied suspicions, which though propagated by the French emigrants, and countenanced, I suspect, by some silly or servile agents in our diplomacy, the Government knew to be ridiculous. I therefore landed without any obstacle, and I perceived by Lord Grenville's manner when I met him in Parliament, that he approved of my having taken his letter as a sufficient authority.

A few days after reading this foolish, pompous, and disobliging epistle about myself, I felt it my duty to defend another of the same writer which excited much clamour in the country. This was a letter from the Duke of Portland to the Lord Lieutenant of Oxfordshire, announcing a short crop, but deprecating the revival or execution of the obsolete laws against forestallers and regraters. There might be some constitutional objection to the form and to the interference of a secretary of state, but the doctrine was sound, and the policy recommended was called for by the

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exigency of the case. In the judgment, however, of the gentry and clergy, who always foster the narrow-minded maxims of past times, this letter was at least an aggravation of the distress, if not the chief cause of the alarm at the scarcity of provisions. In consequence of the failure of the harvest the English Parliament had been unexpectedly summoned before the day appointed for the union of the two legislatures of England and Ireland. The Painted Chamber was fitted up for the temporary accommodation of the House of Commons. The Chief Justice, Lord Kenyon, had not only avowed his intention of enforcing all the old laws against regrating and forestalling, which, while they remained unrepealed, it was perhaps his duty to do, but had gone out of his way to extol the spirit in which they were framed. In this admiration of a mistaken and pernicious system, I believe that he was sincere, for on such matters he was ignorant in the extreme. On the first day of the session,

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as I was the only Opposition peer who attended, I thought it right to express my concurrence in the views taken of this subject in the Duke of Portland's letter, and my strong disapprobation and alarm at those professed by the Chief Justice. Lord Grenville complimented me both in publick and in private for my candour; and those who are disposed to reproach political parties with want of principle, must acknowledge that the Opposition in 1800 disdained to derive popularity from espousing opinions which they thought unsound, though generally held by the people, and sanctioned by the greatest legal authorities. Lord Kenyon's firmness or honesty did not on this occasion keep pace with his ignorance; he thought the old laws wise and just, he was persuaded that a relaxation of them had led to general distress and reduced the poorer classes almost to famine, and yet he had the meanness to waive his objections in submission and compliment to a letter from a secretary of state. Neither on the bench

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nor in his place in Parliament did he ever wag his tongue against a system in his judgment unjust, impolitick, and inhuman, after it had received the sanction of His Majesty's Ministers. This was a strong instance of the propensity in great law officers to bow to power; for Lord Kenyon, though vulgar in his manners and hot in his temper, was not a bad man. With an instinctive genius for law, but without eloquence or any other knowledge, he was a humane judge. If he had some of the failings, he had also the merits of a bigot in politicks and religion. He was generally zealous, sincere, and incorruptible. In this short session some laws, in themselves highly objectionable, were passed, though they had no connexion with the high price of provisions—the only alleged motive for calling Parliament so unexpectedly together. Such was a statute for punishing mutiny and desertion, and such a very pernicious law against combination of workmen. The devices for relieving the distresses arising from the scarcity were

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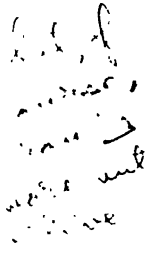
well intended, but for the most part ineffectual and childish. Much wholesome food was wasted in new substitutes for bread, and many inconveniences incurred for the sake of impracticable experiments. The Speaker, Mr. Addington, destined shortly afterwards to act so important a part, gravely informed the world from his father's notes, that bran was more nutritive than grain, a theory which seemed an emblem by anticipation of that policy which made him first minister in lieu of his friend and patron, Mr. Pitt, and thus threw away the kernel and juice of the Government to preserve the husk and rind.



The history of that transaction was involved in some mystery, and time has not hitherto entirely dispelled it. The disasters of the Continent and the state of the King's mind on the subject of the Catholicks, made Mr. Pitt's situation extremely uneasy. The perplexities arising from one or both of these considerations determined him to retire from office, at least for a time. It is, indeed, doubtful

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whether the King, without some morbid impression on his mind, would have resisted the representations of Mr. Pitt, Lord Cornwallis, Mr. Dundas, and Lord Grenville, in favour of the Irish Catholicks. It is not less doubtful whether Mr. Pitt would not have sacrificed his opinion rather than his power if he had not foreseen the necessity of making a peace humiliating to his pride. He was, on the other hand, unwilling, from obvious motives, to make way for his immediate opponents, and he therefore acquiesced in, or perhaps suggested, an expedient by which a ministry, formed chiefly of his own creatures and dependents, was appointed for the express purpose of resisting a great national measure which he had earnestly recommended. The King's prejudice against any concession to the Catholicks, which was soon connected with his insanity, was fomented, if not created, by the representations of Lord Chancellor Loughborough and Dr. Moore, Archbishop of Canterbury, a man of no great talents, entirely under the guidance of his brother-in-

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law, Lord Auckland. What were the motives of those two old associates and politicians, Lord Loughborough and Lord Auckland, in producing a breach between the King and Mr. Pitt, I have never discovered. They were reported to have introduced the Archbishop into the closet for the purpose of raising a scruple about the coronation oath. But this as far as it relates to Lord Loughbourough is certainly, and to Lord Auckland, I believe, untrue. On the contrary, letters are extant from Lord Loughborough (Rosslyn) which, while they maintain and urge the policy and necessity of continuing the laws of exclusion against Roman Catholicks, do nevertheless, distinctly and earnestly disdain and combat the foolish notion that the coronation oath binds the King in his legislative capacity, and obliges him to resist all attempts to repeal certain statutes. If Lord Loughborough designed to gratify his interest or his vanity by this contrivance, he was notably deceived in his calculations. Mr. Pitt accepted his offer of resigning the seals with him, notwith-

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standing their difference on the Catholick question, and conveyed his wish to do so without loss of time to the King. He was, indeed, shortly afterwards consoled with an earldom, but he succeeded so little in ingratiating himself with his royal master, that on his death, which happened soon, His Majesty pronounced his funeral oration by observing that, "He had not left a greater rogue behind him."* The disap-

* Is it not possible that George III. thought him, as some others did, notwithstanding the personal abuse with which he was himself assailed in that work, *the real author of Junius?* His style of speaking and writing was not unlike that popular but shallow author. I had, in May, 1832, a long conversation on this subject with William IV., in which he assured me (*valeat quantum*) that his father told him distinctly that he had no notion nor suspicion who was the author of Junius. He confirmed, however, most strangely the fact related in the text, of George III.'s general dislike and bad opinion of Lord Loughborough, and of the funeral oration which he had pronounced on hearing of his death, which he, King William, said he had himself heard. I have subsequently had access to extracts from the letters of George III. to Lord North during the American War, and they contained abundant

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pointments of that low and grovelling ambition which looks to the favour of a Prince as a compensation for the loss of character and independence should be carefully recorded: let servility learn that it cannot always obtain the miserable reward for which it barters honour and comfort. In justice to Lord Loughborough, I should add that, paltry politician as he was, his reputation as a lawyer has gained ground since his death, that he originally quitted the Scotch bar and resisted the partiality of the Bench with great firmness and spirit, that he was a lover of literature and of philosophy, more vain than sordid, friendly to his adherents, and liberal in all dealings about money. The latter quality is not less commendable in him, for being by no means a characteristick virtue either of his country or of his profession.

Mr. Pitt was too deeply engaged to re-

proof that that Prince's aversion to Wedderburn (Lord Loughborough) was not taken up suddenly, but dated from an early period, and was a rooted feeling in his mind.

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cede with honour. The firmness of Lord Cornwallis and of his other friends, and more particularly of Mr. Dundas himself, reconciled him to resignation; but he showed no disposition to enforce opinions disagreeable to the Court; he publickly avowed that he had recommended Mr. Addington for his successor, and he affected or felt great concern when any of his adherents in subordinate offices quitted them in consequence of his retirement. Some, however, either better informed of his private wishes, or disapproving those which he professed, resigned their employments; and Mr. Canning indulged his talent for satire and ridicule at the expense of Mr. Addington till Mr. Pitt silenced his muse by timely admonition, and even prevailed upon him to write a letter of apology or explanation to the new minister. I have seen it. It is fulsome in expression, but manifestly written under constraint, and at the suggestion of a third person.

Before the official appointments of Mr. Addington and his colleagues were com-

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pleted, and they had kissed hands, the King became seriously ill. At the commencement of the session some symptoms of his disorder had occurred, and I have been confidently assured that medical assistance was required to prevent his exposing the nature of his malady by the introduction of strange and incoherent phrases into his speech to the two houses of Parliament. That state of things, perhaps, contributed to confirm Mr. Pitt's determination to resign. The agitation attending the new arrangements probably aggravated every symptom of His Majesty's disorder, and a paroxysm ensued, which at one time threatened his life, and continued for many weeks to render him incapable of transacting business.

There was a recent Act, called the Brown Bread Bill, which, with a view of diminishing the consumption of wheat, had rendered by its regulations the bread so unwholesome, that had it continued it would have reduced the number of consumers very considerably. This it was necessary to repeal

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without delay; but Ministers were determined to defer any communication of the King's insanity to Parliament for some days longer; Lord Loughborough, therefore, assisted by the Duke of Cumberland, had the hardihood to compel the King to sign a commission when he was in no condition to understand what he did, or to resist what he was ordered to do. No communication had hitherto been made to the Prince of Wales. Lord Fitzwilliam who, at the beginning of the Session, had notified his anxious desire to renew his habits and re-establish his political connexion with Mr. Fox, prevailed on him to come up to London, where he saw the Prince of Wales, and was by him commanded to ask an interview with Lord Loughborough. He collected nothing from that interview but Lord Loughborough's real or affected forgetfulness of every one opinion which he had expressed, and of every one transaction in which he had taken a part in 1788. Lord Moira, though stately and mysterious, was friendly to the Opposition. Mr. Fox thus

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describes his interview with him in a letter to Mr. Grey: "His conversation was all right, but as to the great accession which he supposes the knowledge of his having joined us to bring on your motion, I am not quite so sanguine, especially as he named no one person. However, it is pleasanter that he should appear openly acting with you than to go on with a sort of a secret communication that looks like an intrigue without being one." The King grew better, and the notion of a Regency was abandoned. The new ministers kissed hands, and entered upon their offices. Mr. Fox was decidedly of opinion that the Catholick question should be immediately moved, but the body of the party was very averse to that measure, and Mr. Fox, being totally against using any persuasion on the subject, became more than ever determined to absent himself from Parliament.

He attended, however, a Bill to prevent persons in priest's or deacon's orders from sitting in the House of Commons. This measure arose from the election of John Horne Tooke. That singular man

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seems to have been attended with a strange fatality throughout life. He was expelled from two publick schools, driven in a manner from two professions, became the champion of reform and the enemy of aristocratical influence, stood more than once for the most popular city in the kingdom without success, and was now, at the age of sixty-five, returned for Old Sarum itself, by the interest of Lord Camelford, a near relation of Mr. Pitt, and Lord Grenville. He was objected to by Lord Temple, though there was scarcely a parliament since the Revolution, in which *de facto* a person in priest's or deacon's orders had not sat. A strange compromise between principle and indulgence was recommended by Mr. Addington, and adopted by the House. Mr. Horne Tooke was allowed to sit during that parliament, but all deacons and priests, but himself during that limited period, were declared to be ineligible. He observed with some truth, and with the love of point which distinguished his conversation, that "the candour of Ministers consisted in this,—that

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deacons and priests had sat in Parliament for more than a century; but, at last, one got in who opposed the minister of the day, and then Parliament determined that there never should be any deacons or priests admitted among them hereafter." His right was contended for by Mr. Fox, whom, at various periods he had attacked with acrimony and rancour. "Mr. Fox," said he to me, "has taken a severe revenge. I have passed my life in attacking him, and he has now, for the second time, defended me nobly against the arm of power."

The gratitude which he thus quaintly expressed to Mr. Fox's generosity did not induce him to imitate it; for before Mr. Fox was cold in his grave, he prevailed on Sir Francis Burdett to insult and revile his memory in language uncalled for by any political object, and either misunderstood or disapproved of by Sir Francis himself. He spoke with more candour in private both of individuals, and of the Assembly into which he had been so lately introduced. His own speeches were neat, facetious, ingenious, and subtle, but not

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equal to the expectations formed of him by his friends, or to his own. He told me that "he had a very different view of the House now he had been *in* it, from that which he had taken from without. I thought indeed (said he), and I think so still, that those who govern this country are rogues; but I had no notion that the business was done so ably, or that the members of the Commons House of Parliament were so superior in talent as I have found them." He would himself have shone in that character more had he been chosen earlier. The untoward circumstances of his life might well sour his temper, and his love of victory rather than of truth, of quaint logick rather than of sound sense, were not very unnatural consequences of accidents which had debarred a powerful mind and ambitious spirit from all the usual and honourable avenues to distinction.

Some Acts were passed this Session, "which," Mr. Fox said, "would fully justify and require his attendance, if the *enormity* of the measures had been his ground of

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attending any." Such were the Martial Law and Indemnity Bills. Mr. Francis, at the request of Lord Thanet, who made him make it as *pithy* as possible, wrote a protest to the Martial Law Bill. Lord Thanet, Lord King, Lord Albemarle, and myself signed it. It was somewhat obscurely worded, but implied a justification of resistance. Lord Clare moved to expunge it. Lord Thanet, yet smarting from the Tower, and the Duke of Bedford, I know not why, were earnest and successful in prevailing on Lord Albemarle and myself to satisfy ourselves with a temperate but firm assertion of our right to protest, and to leave the question of expunging it to the House, and the task of justifying the topicks contained in it to our friends. Lord King, with better judgment and more effect, attacked the whole system of Ireland, and declared that whether those words were expunged or not, as long as he had a pen to write, or a tongue to speak, he should ransack his vocabulary for terms strong enough to express his abhorrence of the policy long pursued in Ire-

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land, and now continued and sanctioned by that extraordinary law. Twenty peers signed a protest against the resolution of expunging; but I was overruled by my friends in my wishes of introducing into this second protest the words objected to in the first; a mode of proceeding which must compel a majority either to abandon their arbitrary measure of expunging the words, or to suppress the right of protesting altogether. After this bill, and that which indemnified ministers and magistrates for their conduct during the suspension of the Habeas Corpus, Mr. Addington seemed disposed to lower the high and insolent tone which his predecessors had assumed both at home and abroad. His pacific views in the north came with peculiar grace after the success of Lord Nelson at Copenhagen, and were promoted by the murder of that madman and tyrant, the emperor Paul.*

* Foreigners very unjustly attribute that event to English influence and English money. Nothing can be more unfounded than such a suspicion, though I

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A foolish expedition was undertaken against the flotilla at Boulogne, so ill-managed that even Lord Nelson and British seamen could not make it succeed. Soon afterwards the great work of pacification was accomplished, and preliminaries were signed by Mr. Otto and Lord Hawkesbury in London between the King of Great Britain and the Republick of France. I have been assured by Lord Liverpool (then Lord Hawkesbury) that some few nights before this negotiation was concluded, Mr. Pitt sat up with Mr. Addington, examining and discussing the finances of the country, and

remember that Sir Francis Burdett was weak enough to harbour it. The wonder is, not that Paul was murdered, but that he was endured so long. His son was aware of a conspiracy to depose, not I believe to murder, him. He was justified from considerations of patriotism, as well as self-defence, and had I not been interrupted I should have admitted it when I stated in the course of argument in the House of Lords an undeniable fact, viz., that Alexander succeeded in consequence of the murder of his father, or, as I expressed it, *sat on a Throne yet reeking with the blood of his parent.*

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ended by declaring his conviction that the war could not be carried on, and that peace must be made. The Ministers were very vain of the secrecy with which the treaty had been conducted and concluded. Yet Sir John Macpherson, a strange, officious man, got wind of it, and, finding that Mr. Otto had left Lord Hawkesbury's house, drove abruptly to the French gentleman's door, and, using the name of the Prince of Wales, forced him into his carriage, and conveyed him back to Lord Hawkesbury's villa at Wimbledon, which he did not quit till the preliminaries were adjusted. The intelligence was greeted with joy in every part of the kingdom. Nothing but the influence of the Crown could have suppressed the discontent long felt at the continuance of the war. Yet Lord Chancellor Eldon affected to doubt the propriety of peace till the King, some months after the conclusion of it, said to Mr. Addington, "I did not think you right; but I have now made up my mind to your peace, and I'll support you like a man." It was, in truth, made

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by the pressure of the finances, and by nothing else. "It is a peace," said Mr. Francis, "of which everybody is glad, and nobody proud." Mr. Sheridan, to whom I repeated these words two hours after they were spoken, and who affected not to hear them, in the course of less than two hours, delivered them as his own in the House of Commons, on a conversation for fixing the day for taking it into consideration. Mr. Fox supported the peace in the noblest and frankest manner. He disdained all triumph over Mr. Pitt, and never taunted him with his inconsistency, or insulted him in his hour of humiliation. George III., with his usual address, seized the interval between the preliminary and definitive treaty to apply for the payment of the debts which he had *no right* to incur on the Civil List. On that question Mr. Fox attended, and opposed the vote on the principle of Mr. Burke's Bill; so little disposition did he show, even at that moment, to soften the asperity felt towards him at Court. Mr. Pitt having advised, was bound to support,

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the peace; but his late colleagues, who were already much dissatisfied with his temporising policy out of office, vehemently opposed it. Mr. Windham, in the Commons, employed all his wit and eloquence; and Lord Grenville, in the Lords, all his official and parliamentary knowledge, which was prodigious, as well as his oratory, which was considerable, to discredit the treaty; but the minorities in both houses were insignificant: the followers of Mr. Fox and the Whigs voted with the Ministers.

My attention to parliamentary business was interrupted for some weeks in the spring of 1802, by the illness and death of Francis, Duke of Bedford. His publick character was rising every day in estimation, his great and useful virtues were hourly improving. It was gratifying yet melancholy, to find the country so sensible of his value. The sorrow at his death was expressed among all classes of people in a manner unequivocal and unusual. To me, his loss was severe indeed: to his judgment I had always looked for advice, to his friend-

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ship for assistance. I was at Woburn Abbey when he died; but he wished to avoid the pain of taking leave of his friends, and saw none but his two brothers. With Lord John (the present Duke) he conversed at length, spoke of the regulation of his princely property, and entered with his usual calmness and sagacity into the details of many arrangements which he thought might be conducive to the credit or happiness of those who survived him. Mr. Kerr of Northampton, the surgeon, a man of strong understanding and much experience, told me, that in the course of his practice he had never met with such a patient; "for," said he, "in the agonies of pain and death, he could have governed the world." Mr. Fox took, or rather made, an opportunity of pronouncing a panegyrick on his character in moving the new writ for Tavistock in the House of Commons. It is a gratifying reflection to me, who was devoted to both of them, that the only speech which Mr. Fox ever revised, was that in which he bore his testimony to the virtues of the

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Duke of Bedford. It is indeed, from the nature and form of it, no specimen of Mr. Fox's oratory; but, it is surely a composition of exquisite beauty. Flowing as it did from a heart overwhelmed with grief, it contains not a word of exaggeration; nor is there one topick of praise selected which judgment would disprove or recollection disclaim.

I soon afterwards left England; of domestick events during the years of 1802, 1803, and 1804, I knew only what might be gathered from newspapers, or from private letters, which I have preserved.

Mr. Addington either would not, or could not, embrace the policy or court the assistance of Mr. Fox. The King had indeed acquiesced in the peace, but his opinions on foreign politicks coincided, no doubt, with those of Mr. Windham and Lord Grenville. The factious opposition raised by those ex-Ministers in both houses, the intemperate and scurrilous abuse of the Chief Consul in the daily press, and the witty, eloquent, but foolish exhortations of Mr.

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Sheridan, who was half an ally of Mr. Addington, entangled that minister in endless discussions with the French Government. In the meanwhile, a yet stronger incentive to war occurred. The financial state of the country seemed able to bear it. At the time of the peace there had been fifty-seven millions chargeable on the income tax. That tax was repealed, and the fifty-seven millions were to be provided for. Mr. Addington funded them, and found taxes for the interest, though he avoided the necessity of providing the one per cent. sinking fund upon them. The same operation was resorted to for a considerable loan that year, and no one per cent. sinking fund provided for it, as in former loans.

Neither the fifty-seven millions, the loan, nor the omission of the one per cent. sinking fund depressed the stocks, as Mr. Pitt had foretold, and Mr. Addington had expected that they would. Thus Ministers found themselves prepared for war, his Majesty inclined, and the publick half reconciled to it by the Grenville opposition, Mr. Sheri-

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dan's orations, and the invectives of the press against France. Mr. Addington, therefore *, embroiled the country once more in war, on grounds as flimsy and unjustifiable in form as in substance: they were rash, unjust, and unsound. Mr. Addington was soon deemed unequal to the management of the war by those who had been foremost to engage him in it; and his ministry was the subject of ridicule with the fashionable part of London society; or as old Lord Liverpool described and pronounced it, the *biumond.* Mr. Pitt, Lord Grenville, and Mr. Fox seemed on the point of coalescing, when Mr. Addington resigned; a measure which he has since assured me that he resorted to, from a fear of the King's health much more than from a dread of his opponents. Mr. Pitt made a faint endeavour to prevail on the King to admit all parties into his Cabinet; but

* Lord Hawkesbury, (Lord Liverpool) almost acknowledged to me in terms, that it was this unexpected prosperity of the finances which led to the renewal of war!

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finding the Royal prejudice to men as well as measures, insurmountable, he consented to accept office without obtaining the assistance of the first, or the concession of the second. Lord Grenville was more inflexible, and his honourable rejection of all overtures for a narrow administration, naturally led to a junction between him and Mr. Fox in opposition. In the meanwhile, Mr. Pitt pressed by numbers, talent, and character in Parliament, solicited once more the assistance of Mr. Addington; but raised him to a peerage by the title of Viscount Sidmouth, gave him the place of President, and filled many of his most efficient offices with his relations and dependents.

While these events were passing, I was in Spain and Portugal.

End of Book I. of Memoirs of Whig Party in my time.

V. H.

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BOOK THE SECOND.

FROM 1805 TO SEPTEMBER 1806.

N.B. — Transcribed in 1824 from the forty-nine last pages of the green morocco book which was written in 1809 and 1810, and finished in November 1811.

I LEFT Lisbon in the spring of 1805, in consequence of the intention announced by Mr. Fox and Lord Grenville, of presenting Petitions from the Roman Catholicks to the two Houses of Parliament, praying to be relieved from the disabilities to which they were by law exposed. Many intrigues had taken place to divert them from that purpose.

Apprehensions were expressed by several of their friends about the sensation likely to be created in the Country by the discussion. The agitation of such a question, it was said, had at that moment an appearance of faction, and it was manifestly more

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calculated to embarrass Mr. Pitt, than to assist the Catholicks, or to allay the discontents in Ireland. The timid in the party foretold that the cry of "*The Church is in danger*," always formidable in England, would be raised from one end of the kingdom to the other. It was mischievously * hinted, that the Prince of Wales's connexion with Mrs. Fitz Herbert would enflame and aggravate the virulence of such a cry. That lady had adopted the orphan daughter of Lord Hugh and Lady Horatia Seymour. The Prince, as well as Mrs. Fitz Herbert, had grown passionately fond of the child. Neither the Seymour nor Waldegrave family had taken any interest

* It is just to observe that fear and ignorance, more than mischief, induced some persons to resort to this topick of dissuasion at Carlton House, both upon this and on other occasions. I believe that Mrs. Fitz Herbert herself was, from sheer timidity, always inclined to deprecate the Prince's openly embracing a measure, which would, she thought, expose her to great obloquy, and bring the topick of her marriage with the Heir Apparent into discussion.

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about her education till 1805. The impropriety of having a Protestant infant under the care of a Catholick lady, seems then suddenly to have flashed upon the minds of the Seymours. Whether any political motives or personal jealousies mingled with these scruples, none but persons better acquainted with the parties than myself can decide. Certain it is that a suit was instituted by the young lady's relations, precisely at the period when such a measure was most likely to operate on the Prince's fears, and when it was most essential to the interests of the Roman Catholicks that he should not be swayed by any such considerations. Accident or design, it had a decided effect upon him. He had worked himself up to believe that Mrs. Fitz Herbert's life and his own happiness depended on the society of this child. The alarm raised by the Catholick question would, he was persuaded, operate strongly against Mrs. Fitz Herbert in the courts of equity. These private reasons made him very desirous to postpone the question, or,

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if that could not be done, gave him a strong inclination to abstain from all active exertion in support of the measure. *Perhaps*, notwithstanding some general phrases about toleration, notwithstanding his connexion with Mrs. Fitz Herbert, and notwithstanding his disposition to court popularity in Ireland by affecting more liberality towards Roman Catholicks than his father or brother, he was even then in his heart averse to the measure. My own observations and early suspicions would have led me so to describe him, but I have heard conversations and facts from others, and especially from the Duke of Bedford, Lord Hutchinson, and Lord Wellesley, that stagger me, and prove at least that if he was secretly hostile, he stooped not only to artifice, but to positive treachery and falsehood, to impress them with a contrary conclusion. He had, indeed, promised Mr. Fox to support the question. That promise, he never performed.

The majority of the party were scarcely less indisposed to a motion which they knew to be unpalatable to the Country, and di-

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rectly hostile to the Court. But Mr. Fox was firm — he had the satisfaction of finding his new associate, Lord Grenville, equally so. They remarked that it was the great publick question on which the component parts of Opposition could most consistently and most cordially concur; that the rejection of it could not be attended in Ireland with such fatal effects, as a backwardness in all parties to take up the cause of the Catholicks would inevitably and reasonably produce; that to suppose Mr. Pitt capable of raising the cry "*the Church is in danger*," was to impute to him a profligacy, which those nursed in political enmity to him could not believe, and a want of prudence, taste, and good sense, utterly inconsistent with his character; that, on the contrary, the contrast between his known opinions and the line which as Minister he must adopt, would necessarily compel him to discuss the question in a temper which would induce the more violent even in Ireland to look forward to no distant period for the accomplishment of their wishes.

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These observations were urged by Mr. Fox and Lord Grenville to their respective friends with great earnestness; but after all, it was their authority and inflexibility, rather than their reasons, however incontrovertible, which prevailed on their adherents to support the motion in Parliament. The debates went off well. Mr. Pitt, who had checked out of doors the intemperate zeal of the Churchmen, was extremely moderate in his speech, and justified the expectations and predictions of Mr. Fox. Mr. Grattan was introduced into Parliament, and made his first appearance in the English House of Commons on this occasion. He had been basely calumniated in his own country during the troubles, and he was deeply mortified at the extinction of the Irish Parliament. His health had suffered, and it had been a fashion for some years in England to relate in derision the peculiarities of his manner, phraseology, and style, without doing justice to the unrivalled wisdom of his views, elevation of his sentiments, fancy, imagery,

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and wit of his language. He rose in a house prepared to laugh at him in the face of Mr. Pitt and Mr. Canning*, both of whom had treated him with scorn, and with a manner and voice much exposed to ridicule every where, but more especially so in an Assembly which had never been familiarised to it, had no experience of the sense and genius by which these defects were redeemed, and has, at all times, been remarkable for great reluctance in confirming reputations for oratory elsewhere obtained. When he rose curiosity was excited, and one might have heard a pin drop in that crowded house. It required indeed intense attention to catch the strange and long deep-fetched whisper in which he began; and I could see the incipient smile curling on Mr. Pitt's lips, at the brevity

* Mr. Canning had some years before said, upon his legs, that Dr. Duigenan had consigned Mr. Grattan to eternal ridicule!! When he sat in the United Parliament with both, he must have blushed or smiled at the extravagant absurdity of his own remark!

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and antithesis of his sentences, his grotesque gesticulations, peculiar and almost foreign accent, and arch articulation and countenance. As he proceeded, however, the sneers of his opponents were softened into courtesy and attention, and, at length, settled in delight and admiration. Mr. Pitt beat time to the artificial but harmonious cadence of his periods, and Mr. Canning's countenance kindled at the brightness of a fancy, which in glitter fully equalled, in real warmth and power far exceeded, his own. Never was triumph more complete.

It was really delightful to see an honest man recover, by dint of genius and spirit, that station in the estimation of mankind of which detraction had for a season, to appearance, dispossessed him. It gratified the Irish to find that their popular orator could inspire even Englishmen with admiration, and that the zeal with which they idolised his effusions ceased to be a topick of ridicule the moment the object was known

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in the Union Parliament. Mr. Fox too, ever foremost to applaud contemporary genius, and delighted both at the success of a friend whom he sincerely valued, and at the service rendered to a cause which he earnestly promoted, felt no little complacency at the completion of his prophecy; for he had foretold, on his visit to Ireland, in 1777, that Grattan must succeed in the English Parliament. Neither the censures of more fastidious, but less competent critics, nor the failure of Mr. Flood, had ever induced him to vary that opinion.

Among the many eccentricities that distinguished Mr. Grattan as an orator, nothing was more remarkable than this apparent contradiction. He was artificial in manner, in utterance, in pronunciation, and in style; and yet he breathed such a spirit of benevolence, such a warmth of feeling, and such sincerity of principle, into all his speeches, that, like Mr. Fox himself, he won as much on the affections as on the understanding of his audience. From this period he became a favourite of the House: they not only ad-

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mired his orations, but revered the man. They treated him, even in the decline of his powers, with a deference and tenderness that nothing but a long tenor of honourable conduct and many proofs of an amiable disposition can command or deserve. The success of Mr. Grattan was itself an advantage to the great cause which he had espoused; and, together with the powerful and philosophical speech of Mr. Fox, and the chastened temper of Mr. Pitt's opposition, improved the prospect of the petitioners. But the division was less favourable than Mr. Fox had expected. This latter disappointment was chiefly owing to the shabby and dishonourable defection of the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Northumberland, whose members voted with the majority. In the Lords, the speech of Lord Granville was impressive and argumentative; and it seemed to me that two or three years in opposition had much improved his talents for debate, which I was at no time inclined to disparage. My want of practice for the same space of time had not impaired my

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publick speaking so much as I apprehended. I was satisfied at finding that I could resume the same place in debate that I had formerly filled. Little or nothing was done during the remaining part of the Session in the House of Lords. Lord Melville's business occupied the House of Commons. Every part of it has been so accurately reported, and so minutely canvassed in various publications, that all account of it here would be superfluous. A temper absurdly sanguine, and confidence in his own dexterity and popularity, which long possession of power had produced, made Lord Melville suppose that no prosecution would ever be instituted against him. The impeachment was indeed negatived, but the friends of Lord Sidmouth proposed and carried a prosecution by the Attorney-General. This and other disagreements led to an open rupture between Lord Sidmouth and Mr. Pitt. The former had served the purpose of the Session, and at the close of it was discarded from office, together with

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Lord Buckinghamshire.* Lord Melville's friends quickly perceived that however formidable the word impeachment might sound, a trial before a jury, and, more than all, before Lord Ellenborough, who was, of all Lord Sidmouth's party, the most hostile to Lord Melville, would be much more dangerous. Mr. Pitt had the effrontery to make a thin House of Commons at the lag end of the Session correct the resolution of a full attendance of members, and revert to an impeachment in preference to a prosecution in the King's Bench. Mr. Canning, and that class of Mr. Pitt's friends, concurred cheerfully in this vote, not more from the additional chance of impunity which it afforded Lord Melville, than from the mortification which it occasioned to the Sidmouth party, against whom they were more inveterate than against either Lord Grenville or Mr. Fox. Mr. Pitt's situation was indeed deplorable: his only strength

* Lord Hobart, who is mentioned in the First Book, had succeeded to the title of Buckinghamshire on the death of his father.

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consisted of the dregs of the Court party and of some personal friends, who made no secret of their disapprobation of his conduct. He was unable to screen his oldest friend and associate from ignominy; and he was acting, not only against his own opinions, but against the very men upon whom he would have wished chiefly to rely for personal and political support. He had, I believe, strong inclinations to negotiate with the Whigs in the summer of 1804; more methods than one were adopted to feel the pulse of Mr. Fox. He thought, however, that the conduct of Mr. Pitt in accepting office alone had much diminished his claim upon other publick men, and that the loss of popularity which he had incurred in the affair of Lord Melville had somewhat lessened the value of his co-operation, or at least the price at which it would be worth while to purchase it. The friends of Mr. Pitt threw out that the union between Lord Grenville and Mr. Fox made it necessary for Mr. Pitt, in any project of a combined administration, to stickle for a larger portion of the

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Cabinet; but Mr. Fox drew a consequence directly the reverse from that circumstance, and contended that the increased strength of the party entitled them more decidedly to a majority in the Council. In the meanwhile some indistinct overtures were made, through Mr. Jekyll to Mr. Fox, for a union between him and the friends of Lord Sidmouth. Lord Sidmouth, in some sense, disclaimed the overture, but in terms so guarded and so civil that they implied that the time was not far removed when such a proposal would be made. Whatever were Mr. Pitt's plans of domestick arrangement, the King's early and rooted aversion to Mr. Fox, and the insurmountable obstacles presented by the pending trial of Lord Melville, deterred him from making any direct advances to either of the leaders of Opposition. All his hopes of regaining popularity and influence were directed to the success of the Confederacy which he was then negotiating at St. Petersburgh. The result of that injudicious plan is well known ; and the fatal termination of it at Austerlitz

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excited more concern than surprise in those who were acquainted with the character and resources of the continental powers. Mr. Pitt's vexation at having thus sacrificed what appeared the last hope of Europe, coming upon his yet deeper mortification and grief at the misfortunes of his friend Lord Melville, no doubt hastened his death, though his constitution was so much shattered, that his life could not, under any circumstances, have been much prolonged. An account of his sickness and death is given in the "Annual Register" of 1806 with singular precision. It was taken, in substance, from Dr. Bayley, who had been called in to attend him. I mention it, because a tale relating to the circumstances of his death was fabricated by Mr. Rose, and delivered in his place in Parliament. As Mr. Rose was his intimate associate and steady partisan, and his account was uncontradicted in the House, it might very reasonably obtain credit with posterity. Mr. Pitt was represented by this unscrupulous and injudicious encomiast to have

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exclaimed, in the agonies of death, "save my country, save my country!" and then to have gone through his devotions and taken the Sacrament with the most fervent and edifying piety. In all this there was not one word of truth: for some days before his death his fever had rendered him nearly insensible, and during the last twenty-four hours he was actually speechless. As to religious observances, he at all times complied with the customs of the world, but neither felt nor affected any extraordinary zeal or devotion. Mr. Canning was disgusted at the effrontery of Mr. Rose, and left the House, after observing to his neighbour that the value of historical testimony was impaired by seeing that a lie could pass uncontradicted in the presence of hundreds who knew it to be false.

The events which followed on Mr. Pitt's death are well known. Lord Hawkesbury's acceptance and immediate relinquishment of office*, the difficulties in forming a

* I should have excepted the Wardenship of the Cinque Ports, which he accepted and kept.

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new Administration, the stand made about the Duke of York, and the slovenly manner in which it was got over, are all matters of history; and the publick are as much in the secret as the actors in those transactions. Mr. Fox and the Prince of Wales were the chief advisers of the junction with Lord Sidmouth. The disunited rump of Mr. Pitt's Ministry were no party, whereas Lord Sidmouth's friends, though few, formed a compact body, and if the leaders were inferior in talents to those of other political parties, their subalterns were more respectable than the clerks and secretaries of Mr. Pitt's and Lord Melville's school. Their original exposure of that nobleman's delinquencies, and their consistency in stickling for his prosecution, had gained them some credit in the country, and added to that popularity, which had throughout Mr. Addington's ministry been greater than parliamentary politicians were willing to acknowledge, but which from the moment that they joined the Whigs, declined sensibly, rapidly, and irretrievably. *It will stop up all*

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the earths, was Mr. Fox's expression to me; and subsequent events showed that there was no dirty hole in which George the Third would not have taken shelter rather than be overtaken by those whom he considered as his pursuers. Mr. Fox probably listened to a junction with Lord Sidmouth, more readily from a persuasion that he would not be averse to a pacific system, the only point in policy in which he apprehended any difference of opinion with his other colleagues. A diverting jealousy between Mr. Sheridan and Mr. Tierney was obvious in the course of this negotiation. Both had flattered themselves that they could bring Lord Sidmouth and the Prince of Wales together. Both had described to each of those persons the entire ascendancy which they had respectively acquired over the other. Mr. Tierney throughout the summer had been extolling Lord Sidmouth, expatiating on his honesty, and exaggerating the number of his followers and friends; but when he discovered that Mr Sheridan had been preferred as the negotiator with

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Carlton House, and that no stipulation had been made for him, he bitterly lamented the disproportionate deference paid to the Doctor (as Lord Sidmouth was always called), derided his pretended weight and importance, and ridiculed him with a keenness of wit which had manifestly been sharpened by recent and personal resentment. Lord Sidmouth stipulated for one friend in the Cabinet — he wished to introduce Lord Buckinghamshire, but to him both Lord Grenville and Mr. Fox strongly objected. His talents could add no *éclat* to the Ministry, and his political education had been in the castle of Dublin during the worst eras of Orange ascendancy. As a substitute, it was suggested that Lord Ellenborough might be made Chancellor, and Mr. Erskine cheerfully concurred in a plan which, though it would have deprived him of the most brilliant prize in the profession, would have secured to him the Chief Justiceship, which was less precarious, and no doubt better suited to his talents and acquirements. Lord Ellenborough, however,

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declined the Seals, and Mr. Fox had real satisfaction in transferring them, together with a peerage, to Mr. Erskine, though that arrangement led, *at the suggestion of Sheridan*, to the introduction of a Chief Justice into the Cabinet,—a measure which, though technically unobjectionable, was, as Mr. Fox termed it, rather awkward, and did the Whigs more mischief in publick opinion than many more important oversights and offences. The junction with Lord Sidmouth, on a review of its motives, seems both right and judicious; but even in addition to these untoward circumstances, it was in its consequences very prejudicial to the fortunes of the party. He acted, indeed, as far as I knew, fairly throughout the Grenville Ministry; but he lost all his popularity by belonging to it. His opinions on the questions affecting Catholicks embarrassed us much when a portion of that subject came under our consideration, and the notoriety of his hostility to their claims, was no doubt one of their grounds (and surely no unreasonable ground) for distrusting the

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intentions of our administration. In this latter point of view I spoke of it to Mr. Fox, observing that the want of stipulations with respect to the Roman Catholicks was a sad oversight in the first formation of the Government. He answered, that it depended entirely on the Roman Catholicks themselves, to decide between a friendly ministry without immediate discussion of their claims, or an immediate discussion of their claims with a hostile ministry. He would abide by their decision, and break up his ministry whenever they chose to bring on their question, but they *must* understand the two things to be synonymous. He owned that while there was a prospect of making peace, he hoped that they would give him the chance by not pressing for the discussion of their question, but he repeated more than once, that it was for *them*, not *him*, to decide. He should confine himself to recommending them to leave the question undisturbed till a new Parliament chosen under a Government favourable to their views had been called. The following letter proves how

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accurate was his report of his communication with Roman Catholick Dissenters on the subject. His opinions and views were indeed so plain, honest, and simple, that he gave them without reserve or formality to all who asked for them, and he trusted to the uniform report which those who addressed him upon the subject must give of his answer, rather than to any regular conference, to ensure the acquiescence and confidence of the Catholick body.

To Mr. Ryan, 1806.

"SIR,

"I owe you many apologies for not having sooner written, as I promised you to do in a short letter from St. Anne's Hill, or answered your last. With regard to your last, I have given it to Lord Henry Petty, who has promised to attend to it, and who will, I have no doubt (unless unforeseen difficulties arise), be happy to comply with your wishes.

"With respect to the question you put about the presentation of a Catholick peti-

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tion this year, I have consulted with our friends, who all agree in thinking, that for the interest of the cause, such a measure ought to be deferred to another Session. Measures are actually taking by the removal of Lord Redesdale, Mr. Foster, and others, to show the good intentions of the Ministry towards your body. Steps still more important will be taken to manifest our disposition by doing for the Catholicks all that is consistent with existing bad laws, by giving them in substance what they have now only in words—a right to be in the Army, to be Corporators, &c. &c.; by a change of Justices of the Peace, whose conduct has been notoriously oppressive. I hope too by some arrangement about tythes, and in fine, by giving you all the share in the Government of your country that we can give.

"The effect of these measures will be partly to make the Catholicks of the lower orders more (contented), partly to enable them to come with additional weight and strength when they again assert their

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claims. I therefore strongly recommend suspending the Petition for a time. If, however, it should, notwithstanding our wishes, be presented, I will support it with all my power; but the divisions of last year, and the opinions which have been industriously propagated in this country make, me despair of success unless we could have *active assistance* from a quarter, in which to look for passive acquiescence is perhaps more than we can reasonably expect. If we are beat, which we certainly shall be, and if the fall of our Ministry should follow, which may be the case, you run the risk of a Ministry being formed on the avowed principle of defeating your claims, and you thus would put all hope further off than ever.

"I am, with great regard,

"Dear Sir,

"Ever Yours,

(Signed) "C. J. Fox.

"Downing Street, Tuesday, 1806."

In addition to such accidental communications by letter or conversation, a meeting

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of Irish Proprietors, Protestants, yet friends to the Catholick cause, was held at Carlton House, and the Duke of Bedford was empowered to convey to the Catholicks the opinion of that meeting, as well as of Mr. Fox, that it was not for their advantage to agitate the question at *that* time nor indeed during *that* Parliament. Some have questioned the propriety of Mr. Fox's conduct in thus surrendering his Ministry to the discretion of any set of people; and, above all, of a people so unsteady as the Irish Roman Catholick Dissenters. My doubts were, I own, of a different sort. In point of honour and consistency I knew nothing would be wanting in Mr. Fox; but in true policy, I thought and stated to him at the time that it would have been better either to have refused office till the measure was granted, or to have come to some clear explanation with His Majesty. Many reasons of expediency were indeed to be urged against such a proceeding. Had Mr. Fox lived, the want of such an explanation would

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probably never have been felt. The Roman Catholicks would have continued to repose unlimited confidence in his administration. The apprehension, lest an opportunity of restoring peace to the world might be lost by stickling for a measure which he knew he could not carry, was, I am convinced, the chief motive for leaving his views on that matter unexplained. My persuasion, that had he outlived the negotiation, he would have risked the Ministry, and urged the removal of the Catholick disabilities, made me less scrupulous in following my own judgment and earnestly pressing the adoption of the general measure, or, at least, of some inferior concession (which would be an assistance and a pledge for the speedy adoption of the whole) on my colleagues when I was in office myself.

The omission of Lord Lauderdale's name in the list of the Cabinet was another weighty objection to the arrangements. I remarked it to Mr. Fox: he was not less discontented at it than myself, but Lord Lauderdale's long absence in Scotland, and

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exclusion from Parliament without diminishing one tittle of his claims on his friends, had somewhat obstructed the facility of satisfying them when the concurrence of new connexions, whose prejudices against him had not hitherto been softened by intercourse, was necessary to the accomplishment of that purpose. "It is a damned thing," (said Mr. Fox) "but it could not be otherwise. I saw it would not do, and one must not be impatient." Lord Lauderdale behaved with his usual good feeling and good sense. He consented, at Mr. Fox's earnest entreaties, to show that he was not out of humour by taking a sinecure. Lord George Cavendish and Mr. Coke of Norfolk* refused Peerages, and Lord Howick (Lord Grey) somewhat hastily answered for Mr. Whitbread's declining both title and office, an act of friendship which did not strengthen the ties of family connexion or political attachment between them. In general, the Grenvilles showed

* Sir Watkin Williams Wynne did so likewise.

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a keen appetite for place and patronage, but the Foxites were thought to have obtained their full share of voices in the Cabinet.

The History of the Administration during the Session, is to be found in the Debates in Parliament, and in the Annual Register of 1806, the work of Mr. Allen, and one of more exactness, perspicuity, and judgment than has appeared in that publication since the time of Edmund Burke.

The prominent features of the Session were, a pertinacious opposition on a few unimportant subjects, the plan of limiting the duration of Military Service, and the measures preliminary to the abolition of the African Slave trade. With respect to the first, the plan was itself disagreeable to the King and the Duke of York; and the author of it, Mr. Windham, was popular neither in the Party nor in the Country. Many, just tasting the sweets of office, were unwilling to endanger them, out of compliment, as they thought and said, to the man in the Government most obnoxious

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to the Court, and most unpopular in the Country. Among these were the Marquis of Buckingham and Lord Erskine. Neither of them, could they have known their own situations, would have been anxious to establish the principle of sacrificing a friend to popular clamour. Such a rule of policy would have despoiled the Marquis of part of his immoderate gains, and would have precluded Lord Erskine from the Seals, which the just and steady partiality of Mr. Fox, not the voice of the party, and still less the dictates of convenience had placed in his hands. Mr. Fox was not less inflexible about Mr. Windham and his plan. He told all who spoke to him, and Lord Erskine in particular, that the fate of the Administration depended on it, that he would not stay in one hour after it was dropped. He was even concerned at Mr. Windham's conceding a point or two in the detail, to which he suspected the objections had been urged with a view of embarrassing rather than improving the plan. Mr. Fox, therefore, had his full share in the merit

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of that excellent measure. The principle of it had been often recommended in Parliament. General Fitz Patrick had proposed it more than once at the end of the American War. Mr. Windham, however, had the honour of pressing it more effectually on publick attention, of reducing it to a system, and illustrating its advantages with all the fertility, keenness, and felicity of his abundant genius and exquisite wit.

The firmness of Mr. Fox was as necessary to its success as all these supports; but for that Mr. Windham would have been basely abandoned by his friends, and the country would have lost the advantage of a great and permanent* improvement in the recruitment and constitution of its military force. Mr. Windham was not insensible to the noble-minded conduct, on all occasions, of Mr. Fox to him, or to his cordial and dis-

* I believe the word "*permanent*" should be erased, for the subsequent modifications and arrangements (generally the suggestions of its opponents) have disfigured the measure, and deprived the army and the country of the full benefit of the system.

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interested support of this plan in particular. While he retained, therefore, many of his peculiar opinions, so opposite to those of his colleague, his personal inclinations were from this moment obviously more directed to Mr. Fox and his immediate adherents, than to any other branch of the political association with whom he acted.

Though so frequently divided in opinions, Mr. Windham and Mr. Fox were in temper, manner, tastes, and pursuits admirably adapted to one another. A disdain or rather loathing of all cant and hypocrisy was a prominent feature in the character of both. Mr. Windham, indeed, was neither so easy in his disposition, nor so affectionate or gentle in his nature; but he had in appearance, at least, the same frankness and fearlessness of character, the same, and even greater, readiness to converse on all subjects of literature and philosophy. He had even a more active, though not an equally powerful, spirit of inquiry than Mr. Fox. In knowledge of men, and yet more in the management of them, he was wofully

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inferior, not only to Mr. Fox, but to many persons, who in all other respects could bear no comparison with either. He had indeed, many other grievous defects, which, in the course of these papers I may be called upon to describe and acknowledge; but he united withal, the qualities of an orator, a philosopher, a scholar, and a companion more than any publick man, Mr. Fox excepted, that I have been acquainted with.

His conversation, agreeable to all men, was peculiarly so to Mr. Fox. It was remarkable that with all his passionate devotion to certain authorities, his bitter personal resentments against some publick characters, and his unconquerable and silly prejudices on many important topicks, his appetite for discussion was such, that he would often converse on his most rooted opinions with wonderful temper and candour, and seem even for a time to acknowledge the force of arguments directed against them. Mr. Fox could not prevail upon him to suppress, and hardly to soften, his opposition to the abolition of the Slave Trade. He had, at the

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commencement of those discussions, been one of the most ardent supporters of the Abolition; but the French Revolution had intervened. The fear of anything like the extension of freedom at that era had led him to oppose the Abolitionists, and he had been much extolled for the boldness of his opposition. To the praise of despising popularity, his vanity was never insensible, and that weakness, perhaps full as much as any real opinion on the subject, gained him the unenviable distinction of being one of the most pertinacious opposers of a great act of justice; and one of the last sticklers for a traffick horrible to humanity, and condemned alike by sound philosophy and by safe or enlightened policy.

The recommendation of Lord Lauderdale to the Government of India, rejected by the Court of Directors, became a topick of discussion in the House of Lords. Lord Lauderdale, indeed, with the disinterested generosity which does not even seek for the credit which it deserves, relinquished the object on which he had set his heart, from an appre-

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hension of harassing Mr. Fox, then in a weak state of health, by a protracted discussion with the Company, rather than from any doubt of ultimate success if the Ministry had persisted in appointing him. Those who were wanting in love towards him, or abounding in love to their newly acquired places, rejoiced at his withdrawing his pretensions, and even those who despised such motives and knew his value, acquiesced in a decision which, while it deprived the Administration of his abilities at Bengal, and him of a favourite object of ambition, preserved his health, then recently recovered from a liver complaint, from the severe trial of an Indian climate. Lord Minto, President of the Board of Controul, through whom the negotiations with the Company for the appointment of Lord Lauderdale had passed, was immediately nominated and accepted. Mr. Fox remarked, that it was possible that Lord Minto had acted fairly throughout the business; "but if so, (added he) he is unlucky, for I suppose he can hardly expect that any one will give him credit for having done his

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utmost to crush an opposition, which, when successful, ends in his appointment, nomination, and acceptance of the office." This was the second mortification to which Lord Lauderdale was exposed: he bore them with so much good humour that even his friends seemed to forget how much he was overlooked.

Lord Moira, at the formation of the Ministry, was Commander-in-chief in Scotland. He had considerable merit as a military man, and many advantages arising from personal character and situation. High rank, liberality bordering on profusion, but the offspring of a sincere, though somewhat indiscriminate disposition to oblige, a talent of speaking with great fluency and some effect, though perhaps *plus loquentiæ quam eloquentiæ*, which Mr. Curran humorously called "airing his vocabulary," — these qualities, together with his reputed favour with the Prince of Wales, had exalted him to great importance, though not to so much as his sanguine and unsuspecting nature supposed. He did not arrive in London till

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the Cabinet places were *settled*, and the Ordnance, with the approbation of the Prince of Wales, had been assigned to him. He was not so well satisfied with this arrangement as the Prince had been for him. If he could not be First Lord of the Treasury, or Commander-in-chief, he wished, at least, to have more patronage than his office and seat in the Cabinet afforded him. With a view to gratify him, and to conciliate the Prince, his recommendations were greatly attended to, and more Peerages and honours were conferred at his instigation than at that of any other individual, Lord Grenville and Mr. Fox alone excepted. They were all more calculated to display his influence in procuring favours than to promote the interests of the party or even his own. They were given to men who never professed attachment to the Whigs or to him, and who, it was foreseen, would take (as most of them subsequently did) the first opportunity of deserting both.

But the most formidable and least reasonable of all his pretensions related to the

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patronage of Scotland. With that country, though an Irishman, he was recently connected by marriage. During his residence at Edinburgh as Commander-in-chief, he had acquired the sort of popularity which a princely demeanour and open table procure. He mistook this for real influence. Common professions of civility passed with him for proofs of political reverence and attachment. He was anxious, therefore, to have what was called the management, that is, the patronage, of Scotland, and absurdly expected to attach to the Ministry the old adherents of Lord Melville, by the notable contrivance of leaving them in their offices to the exclusion of those who had for years been labouring in opposition, and who were thus to see not their opponents only, but their persecutors, preferred to them, by a Ministry calling itself Whig. This scheme was too unjust and too foolish to be ultimately adopted. The very proposal did mischief. It countenanced an idea already suggested to Lord Grenville, that the immediate followers and friends of Mr. Pitt

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would insensibly fall into his wake, and, swelling the general number of the party, strengthen, at the same time, the relative force of his particular squadron. The delay in the removal of obnoxious persons shook all confidence in the vigour of the new Ministry. It was at last determined to appoint no person to manage for Scotland, but to leave the patronage of that country to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, to whom, in some sense, it officially belonged. This arrangement was, perhaps, on general principles, more unexceptionable than the practice hitherto resorted to. It is possible, too, that Lord Moira's pretensions were, by this device, eluded less offensively than by the office, if it can so be termed, being given to any other person. But Lord Lauderdale was thus deprived of that influence to which, on the return of the Whigs to power, his situation, abilities, and long services in their cause clearly entitled him; and the Ministry sensibly lost the advantages which, under his guidances, the distribution

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of offices in Scotland would have procured for them.

Among the claimants from that country was Walter Scott, then rising fast to that eminence which his Muse may possibly forfeit by her importunity, but certainly will not silently relinquish through indolence, indifference, or exhaustion. He had been promised by Mr. Pitt's Administration the Clerkship of Session, an office worth some hundreds per annum. Some arrangements, in themselves not altogether advisable, were necessary towards carrying that object into execution. Those with whom politicks were a stronger passion than poetry, deprecated the completion of a plan, in itself objectionable, of which a political enemy was to reap the benefit. Mr. Fox thought that pretty poetry atoned for adherence to Lord Melville; and Lord Spencer listened to the generous maxim inculcated in that old quotation,

"Non obtusa adeo gestamus pectora Pœni,
Nec tam aversus equos Tyriâ Sol jungit ab urbe."

He was left to enjoy the place. He owed

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this forbearance to persons whom he shortly afterwards lampooned in a manner not only indecent, but unfeeling. The principle, however, of overlooking political offences in favour of literary talents is not only propitious to the cause of letters, but highly advantageous to the party which acts upon it. In this instance, some better mode of obliging Mr. Scott might have been devised; but none who had a hand in it, can regret having rewarded the author of the "Lay of the last Minstrel." The small pension granted on the English establishment to Mr. Campbell, was liable to none of these observations; and the Whigs had the satisfaction, in that instance, of seeing an eager friend, as well as a good poet, rewarded; though they mingled with approbation of the object, some regret at the smallness of the pension.

Mr. Fox asked me what I wished for myself? I answered, an office of business in which I could be useful. I added, that Lady Holland's predilection for foreign modes of living would make me prefer a

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diplomatick station to any other, and that the embassy at Paris, when peace came, would of course be my ultimate object in that line; but I repeated to him above once, that I was not in the least impatient; that I should prefer waiting till some opportunity occurred when the employment of one so nearly connected with him might be deemed useful, to accepting any inferior office; but that in all his views about me, I hoped that he would consider that I had no inclination so strong as that of being of use to him. Shortly after he proposed to me, and I accepted, the mission to Berlin; but the seizure of Hanover by the Prussian troops brought on hostilities with that Court. Indeed, it was in Parliament that I could render the party or ministry best service. By continual practice I was likely to improve as a speaker; and in the course of the debates relating to Lord Melville's impeachment, I acquired the ear of the Houses, and made considerable progress as a debater.

That trial was miserably conducted by the

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Commons. Though there were five or six lawyers among the managers, the Articles were so ill drawn, that it was difficult to ascertain to which act of Lord Melville each respectively referred. Sir Samuel Romilly made a good sarcastic speech; but the only person who did himself real credit was Sir Arthur Piggot, who spoke in the authoritative tone of a representative of the people; and though he combated the technical objections of the counsel with the learning of a lawyer, and handled them judiciously and successfully, never lost sight of the great principle, that the Commons of England in impeaching a State delinquent, were not to be fettered by the strict rules of Inferior Courts. Mr. Whitbread, though he had pursued the subject with prodigious diligence, and understood the whole transaction thoroughly, was so occupied in displaying his wit and eloquence, or, as the lively Duchess of Gordon expressed it, with teaching his "dray horse to caper," that his speeches convinced nobody, and, even in matters of complicated accounts, left the Lords to draw the facts from the evidence

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as well as they could without any assistance from him. This mismanagement, no doubt, contributed to secure an acquittal; but other circumstances occurred from which it was easy to forebode it. Lord Grenville and Lord Spencer absented themselves after the third day of the trial. If they were satisfied of Lord Melville's innocence, they should have pronounced him *Not Guilty;* but, if they found the charges against him proved, both duty and interest should have led them to convict him. The questions which they asked when present, and the period at which they chose to retire from the investigation, were thought to imply an unwillingness to convict, almost equivalent to a disposition to screen, an old colleague.

The acquittal of Lord Melville encouraged the enemies and disappointed the friends of the new Ministry. It was imputed by the publick either to fear of the party to which he belonged, or to tenderness for the species of guilt in which he was involved. The first view shook the confidence of interested men in the stability

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of their power, and the other somewhat impaired the reliance of the honest and zealous in the inflexibility of their principles. In the Lords, Lord Erskine's ignorance of forms, and Lord Ellenborough's intemperance threatened to confirm the impression, so unfavourable to the prosecution produced by the mismanagers in Westminster-Hall. Lord Lauderdale and myself exerted ourselves in the intermediate discussions; and we flattered ourselves that we placed the whole question in a clearer point of view. We perhaps did not obtain a vote from any Lords who were not already convinced: but we drove some who were disposed to acquit Lord Melville, away, and we harassed the consciences of many, who were determined at all risks to save the associate of Mr. Pitt. Lord Eldon himself, acknowledged on his legs, that he would rather cut off his right arm, than be guilty of such *culpable negligence* and *criminal indulgence* as Lord Melville. He rested the defence on technical arguments, which, if applicable to impeachments, render that

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cumbrous and inconvenient mode of proceeding useless and unnecessary, on the construction of the Act of Parliament, and on the legal definition of the crimes charged in the Articles. On these points he procured a reference to the Judges. Sir James Mansfield in an able, but passionate speech, declared the words of the Act of Parliament so wide of their intention, that had Lord Melville spent the money entrusted to him at a gaming table, and yet paid the demand when made upon him, he would have incurred no penalty, but such as the laws annex to the practice of gaming! Lord Melville was himself the author of that Act, and, both by previous parliamentary resolutions and by speeches at the time, had shown that it was his intention to provide against the very abuse of which he was now accused, but which Peers and Judges friendly to him contended that his law had not reached. He was no sooner acquitted, than, with characteristick and constitutional effrontery, he appeared in his place in the House of Lords to argue against Lord Lauderdale's appoint-

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ment to India, in opposition to the Court of Directors, and insisted that Acts of Parliament were not to be *literally or technically construed*, but their sense and spirit to be collected from the temper of the times, the resolutions of the House of Parliament in which they originated, and the speeches and intentions of those who had proposed them.

Lord Melville was the son, by a second marriage, of Mr. Dundas of Arniston, a Tory family in the county of Mid Lothian. His father, afterwards President of the Court of Session, had, when young, distinguished himself at the bar, on the trial of a Mr. Carnegie for the murder of Lord Strathmore, by recovering the lost privileges of a Scotch Jury. Since the period of Charles the Second, an abuse had crept in, of confining the verdict of a jury in Scotland to the words "proven," or "not proven," instead of "guilty," or "not guilty." The effect of this manœuvre in criminal cases was the same as the doctrine of the Judges in the case of libels in England, till exposed by the glorious exertions

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of Mr. Erskine, and corrected by the famous Bill of Mr. Fox. The Scotch Jury, like the English, were defrauded of their jurisdiction, and pronounced on the truth only, not on the criminality, of such facts as it suited the purpose of the prosecutor to charge in the indictment. Mr. Dundas, father to the first Lord Melville, succeeded in vindicating their rights. His elder brother was likewise a distinguished lawyer, and for many years presided at the Court of Session. He was himself called to the Bar at an early period of life — represented Mid Lothian in consequence of his family interest, and procured, first by espousing and then by abandoning the reforming party, the command of the corporation of Edinburgh. He was made Lord Advocate by Lord North, whom he first supported, outdoing him in violence against the Americans, but whom he deserted on the first appearance of the decline of his power. In the changes and intrigues of that period, his versatility was extraordinary, and his want of principle noto-

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rious; but his talents and courage showed that he was an useful man. He contrived to remain Lord Advocate with Lord Rockingham and Lord Shelburne, was supposed to be amongst the foremost in urging Mr. Pitt, then very young, to set up for himself; and thus, after the short interval of the Coalition Ministry, found himself higher both in station and confidence with the new Premier than he had ever been with his predecessor. He had very soon discovered Young Mr. Pitt to be a sure card, and from that time his wavering principles seem to have been fixed. By the combined influence of his own family, and of the Duke of Buccleugh, whom he governed, he acquired great ascendency in Scotland. The first use that he made of his favour with Mr. Pitt did him great credit, and secured to him the gratitude of many powerful connexions in his native country. This was the restoration of the forfeited estates. Mr. Fox, ever active in promoting acts of clemency and generosity, seconded the measure. Some unfair dealing has been

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suspected in the details; but, on the whole, it was very honourable to Lord Melville, and the more so, as one of the Cabinet, Lord Thurlow, had the ill-nature to oppose it. The subsequent career of Henry Dundas, Lord Melville, is well known. His Parliamentary merits consisted chiefly in outward appearance, spirit, and readiness; an unblushing countenance, a manly figure, a sort of grotesque hoaxing eloquence conveyed in a loud voice and a provincial dialect, which was neither pleasantry nor invective, and yet reminded one of both. He never hesitated in making any assertion, and without attempting to answer an argument, he either treated it as quite preposterous, or, after some bold misstatements and inapplicable maxims, confidently alleged that he had refuted it. These resources in debate, such as they were, he had always at hand. Mr. Fox used to say that he never failed to speak with effect unless when by some strange fatality he happened thoroughly to understand the subject on which he spoke, and then he was

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long, dull, and tedious beyond all sufferance. He had much frankness and good-humour in his manner and countenance, but no man was more implacable in his hatreds.

His talents for business, which have been much vaunted, consisted rather in dispatch than in great penetration or judgment. He knew enough to go through the duties of Office rapidly, but he knew no more. Indeed, he despised all knowledge of which the practical advantage was not obvious and immediate, and his sole estimate of merit was, the account it could be turned to. If, however, his business was not always highly finished, it was soon got out of hand; and Mr. Windham, who said of him, that he performed coarse jobs well, but was quite unfit for Cabinet Work, was himself perhaps an illustration that dispatch in business, and readiness of decision, are qualities not less essential in a Minister than acuteness of understanding and firmness of mind. Lord Melville, though an implacable enemy, was a steady and unscrupulous promoter of the interests of his

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followers. In furthering the views of his friends, or thwarting those of his opponents, he was alike regardless of the interests of the Country. Patronage, thus employed, secured to him great authority in Scotland.

His acquittal was hailed as a triumph by a large portion of powerful men in that country. Had the Whig Ministry lasted long enough for the impression of his trial to wear away, and for him to determine his plan of operations, they would have found him, even with his shattered constitution and broken reputation, a very formidable opponent. But the proceedings against him were yet fresh in publick recollection when Lord Grenville's administration was overturned. Their successors did not consider themselves strong enough to sustain the odium of his name in their new Cabinet. He was, consequently, left in an anomalous situation, where the hostility of one party, and the apprehensions of the other, prevented him from taking an active part, till infirmities and other circumstances had rendered him comparatively insignificant.

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Mr. Fox continued, during a great part of the Session, to exert his wonderful abilities in refuting the arguments of a miserable Opposition, which seemed to make up for its deficiencies in numbers, talent, and character by the frequency, length, and pertinacity of its attacks on every trivial occasion. It would be uncharitable to ascribe this conduct to motives so malignant that nothing but positive evidence would justify us in attributing them to Gentlemen. There were not, however, wanting persons at the time who suspected that the spleen of the excluded subalterns of office was gratified by the idea of harassing the health of one with whom they were unequal to cope in debate.

I had been struck, on my return to England, with the change in Mr. Fox's countenance. The cheerfulness of his spirits, and the charms of his conversation, soon wore out the impression. He was, however, more liable to slight indispositions than he had been; and, at the funeral of Lord Nelson, which I attended with him, I ob-

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served that the length of the ceremony, and coldness of the cathedral, overpowered him in a way that no fatigue which I had ever known him undergo had done heretofore. I attributed, however, these slight illnesses to accidental causes, combined with habits of indulgence, which long and uninterrupted health had given him. I little suspected that in his frame were lurking the seeds of a disorder which, in one short year, was to deprive our country and (is it an exaggeration to add?) mankind of its best hope and brightest ornament. The debates during the Session had much fatigued him. He had, once or twice, had recourse to medicine at the suggestion of his friends and of his physician, Dr. Moseley. But none of them, I believe, apprehended (certainly I did not) any fatal disease, till Lord Lauderdale, who was well acquainted with the symptoms of dropsy, from having attended his own father, who died of that disorder, called our attention to the swelling of his legs, and the falling away about the neck

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and chest. From this time, though naturally sanguine, I was more observant. Mr. Fox's vigour, appetite, and even spirits, were sensibly impaired. Having discovered that he was vexed with another complaint* comparatively of slight consequence, I was willing to ascribe the unusual thoughtfulness and dejection of his countenance to a combination of fatigue and meditation on the nature of a troublesome disorder, of the remedy necessary to remove it, and of the postponement of that remedy which was equally necessary to a perfect cure.

Early in June I dined and spent the day with him, at the request of Mrs. Fox. He had been attacked by rheumatism in the thighs, and by a very unusual dejection of spirits. In consequence of my observations on his appearance that day, I concurred earnestly with Mrs. Fox in pressing him to consult some other physician as well as Dr. Moseley, who, though full of attachment to him, and not perhaps devoid of skill, was far from enjoying a

* Hydrocele.

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high reputation. Sir Henry Halford, then Dr. Vaughan, had indeed seen him once; he had urged, very strongly, the necessity of care, attention, and quiet; but he had advised no material alteration of medicines, and did not seem, to me, to apprehend any immediate danger of dropsy. In the meanwhile, Mr. Fox had gone up to the House of Commons. His earnestness about the abolition of the Slave Trade induced him to continue his attendances longer than the advice of his friends or his own judgment approved; but even after he absented himself from Parliament, he wrote his dispatches with his usual perspicuity and ease, and talked occasionally on publick as well as private matters, with as much vivacity, earnestness, and wisdom as ever. When, however, he gave Lord Henry Petty and myself directions to draw out the sketch of a treaty with Sicily, about which he was particularly earnest, the exertion of attending to the detail of the articles fatigued and oppressed him exceedingly. That was the last business which

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he could strictly be said to transact; his exertions henceforward were limited to signatures, occasional conversations with his colleagues, a few letters, which he wrote himself, and others which he dictated. The latter practice was to him entirely new. "I thought it" (said he) "very difficult; but I soon found I could do it well enough, and it is a great relief."

At a very early period of the Administration, he had told me that he looked forward some time or other to retire from the office which he held; that, in the event of peace, the tiresome and unimportant duties annexed to it would increase, that he would then take some less active situation, or remain in Cabinet without any, and give me the seals of the Foreign Office, as he could, in that case, without indelicacy, superintend all matters of importance, and make opportunities of talking them over, when he was so inclined, or avoid them, when he had a fancy for literature or any other pursuit. This scheme, he observed, would inure me to business; and with that

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contented tone of voice which always accompanied his kindness, he added: "It will be nice too, for it will secure my seeing you at St. Anne's when I am there." Of these projects, though made for some distant time, he had probably spoken to others; for when his disorder assumed a more alarming appearance, his colleagues offered some arrangement of the sort. Lord Howick (Grey) came to him with a proposal, which included a Peerage, if he liked it, to save him from the yet more laborious duty of the House of Commons. Mrs. Fox was in the room when this suggestion was made. At the mention of the Peerage, he looked at her significantly, with a reference to his secret but early determination never to be created a Peer; and, after a short pause, he said: "No, not yet, I think not yet." On the same evening, as I sat by his bedside, he said to me: "If this continues (and though I don't fear any immediate danger, I begin to see it is a longer and more serious business than I apprehended), I must have more

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quiet than with my place I ought to have, and put the plan I spoke to you about, sooner in execution than I intended. But don't think me selfish, young one. The Slave Trade and Peace are two such glorious things, I can't give them up, even to you. If I can manage *them*, I will then retire." He then talked over some arrangements connected with that scheme, and his own situation in the Cabinet without office, and added: "The peerage, to be sure, seems the natural way, but that cannot be. I have an oath in Heaven against it; I will not close my politicks in that foolish way, as so many have done before me."

His disorder was pronounced to be dropsy, when Sir Henry Halford (Vaughan) was called in for the second time, and allowed to examine him more strictly than he had hitherto permitted him or any other physician to do. Though neither impatient nor desponding in sickness, Mr. Fox had little confidence in medical skill, and less curiosity, even on subjects connected

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with the health and management of the human body, than on any other. He was, consequently, very averse to relate symptoms which put him to no immediate inconvenience. He would not have been easily prevailed upon to take any strong drugs, or to submit to any regimen or discipline, upon the apprehension of remote danger; for whoever had been his medical attendant would have found it difficult to obtain credit with him for much foresight on such subjects. I mention this, because it afterwards appeared that the seeds of his disorder had been laid full two years before. A severe pain in his side, which attacked him at Cheltenham in 1804, proceeded, no doubt, from that affection in the liver which ultimately brought him to the grave. It would, however, have required great sagacity in any physician, even with a willing and confiding patient, which Mr. Fox never was, to detect the latent cause of his illness at that period; and it would even then have been still more difficult to persuade Mr. Fox of his sagacity, and of the truth

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of his apprehensions, and of the necessity of submitting to severe discipline to remove a complaint, the existence of which was conjectured by his physician, but not proved by his own sensations. The details of the progress and management of Mr. Fox's disease cannot, I am aware, be very interesting to the world; but I have mentioned these circumstances in justice to his friends and his physicians, lest the rumours circulated at the time should lead any future biographer or historian to imagine that his death was occasioned by neglect or mismanagement. If there were any neglect in the commencement of his disorder, it arose from his habits, opinions, and character, and was entirely his own: if there were any mismanagement, it was of a kind that the eminent physicians latterly called in, Sir Henry Halford, and Dr. Pitcairn, and his friend Mr. Hawkins the surgeon, never discovered nor corrected.

Soon after the serious nature of his disorder had been ascertained, Lord Yarmouth abruptly and unadvisedly produced his full

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powers at Paris; the Cabinet, in consequence, named Lord Lauderdale to conduct the negotiation. My uncle's intention had, at one time, been to send me or General Fitz Patrick. In his then state of health, I should certainly have declined it; but I own that I was weak enough to feel two minutes' mortification, on Lord Howick's (Lord Grey) not giving me the option. I felt this more sensibly when, on approaching my uncle's bedside after he had heard of, and sanctioned, Lord Lauderdale's appointment, he said, with a melancholy smile of affection that I can never forget—"So you would not leave me, young one, to go to Paris, but liked staying with me better—there's a kind boy." He thus gave me credit for refusing what had never been offered to me, and I did not like to explain the circumstances for fear he might misinterpret my explanation into an expression of disappointment at not going. I answered: "Why, I hope I may be useful to you here; and I am sure, if you like my being here, it would be very odd if I did not prefer staying."

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From this period, in addition to frequent calls in the morning, I regularly attended his bedside for an hour or two every night after his visitors and secretaries had retired. Mr. Trotter, Mrs. Fox, or my sister, generally read to him during the day. The books he chose were chiefly novels. When he wished to hear anything else, he expressed that wish while it was my sister's turn, with whose reading he was very naturally delighted, or he reserved it till the evening for me. "For" (said he) "I like your reading, young one, but I liked it better before I had heard your sister's. That is better than yours, I can tell you." I noticed that he was growing to love his niece more and more every day. Various accidents had prevented his seeing much of her till the year 1803. All her excellent qualities, both of head and heart, came upon him at once, and endeared her, as well they might, most sincerely to her uncle.

I read the whole of Crabbe's "Parish Register" over to him in MS. Some parts he made me read twice; he remarked several

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passages as exquisitely beautiful, and objected to some few, which I mentioned to the author, and which he, in almost every instance, altered before publication. Mr. Fox repeated, once or twice, that it was a very pretty poem; that Crabbe's condition in the world had improved since he wrote the "Village," and his view of life and of mankind had improved likewise. The "Parish Register" bore marks of some little more indulgence to our species; though not so many as he could have wished, especially as the few touches of that nature are beautiful in the extreme. He was particularly struck with the description of the substantial happiness of a farmer's wife. He did not, however, observe, what was nevertheless quite true, that the improvement in Mr. Crabbe's fortune was, in a great measure, owing to himself. While Lord Thurlow was in office, he overcame his reluctance to asking favours of a political enemy, and urged that Chancellor to encourage genius by giving Mr. Crabbe some preferment. Lord Thurlow did some-

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thing for him; and the Duke of Rutland, who had been applied to by Lord John Townshend, did more. His success in the Church, though very moderate, seemed for awhile to check rather than animate his ardour for poetry. He passed several years without publishing anything; and it was not till after an accidental conversation with Mr. Fox, who met him while shooting in Suffolk*, that he confessed that he had written some poems, but never printed them, and agreed to send them in MS. for Mr. Fox's perusal and judgment. These were the poems which I read to Mr. Fox.

The rest of my time with him was chiefly passed in conversation. Immediately after Lord Lauderdale's departure for Paris, we had many discussions on the negotiation. The demand of the French that we should give up Sicily, irritated and disappointed him exceedingly. He considered it not only as an inadmissible pretension, but as an indication of bad faith and insincerity

* At Mr. Dudley North's.

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on the part of the French Government. Indeed, when I somewhat foolishly imagined that an equivalent might be found for the King of Naples—that a retreat either in South America, or on a large pension, might be offered to the King of Sardinia, and a kingdom of islands formed of Sardinia, the Balearic islands, and some other small islands in the Mediterranean as an exchange for Sicily, he answered me by saying, "No, no! Bad as the Queen and Court of Naples are, we can, in honour, do nothing without their full and *bonâ fide* consent; but even exclusive of that consideration, and of the great importance of Sicily, which you, young one, very much underrate, it is not so much the value of the point in dispute, as the manner in which the French fly from their word, that disheartens me. It is not Sicily, but the shuffling, insincere way in which they act, that shows me they are playing a false game; and in that case it would be very imprudent to make any concessions, which by possibility could be thought inconsistent with our honour, or

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could furnish our allies with a plausible pretence for suspecting, reproaching, or deserting us." He generally used to break off such conversations very abruptly by saying, "And now no more politicks." In truth, he seldom allotted more than a quarter of an hour to such topicks.

There was, indeed, one subject relating to patronage on which he was extremely uneasy: he thought, that till he had provided for the person whom I allude to, he had left undischarged a long arrear of obligations. That person, by very obtrusive and unreasonable conduct at the formation of the Ministry, had embarrassed, irritated, and even exasperated him. But it was not easy, even by misconduct, to cancel a debt of gratitude in the mind of Mr. Fox, if he thought that he had ever contracted it. He was miserable till he could requite the former zealous services of this person.

When Lord Howick very handsomely devoted a place in his gift to that object, Mr. Fox was perfectly satisfied; he told me more than once after that arrangement was completed, that he had nothing of the same

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sort on his mind, no reason to complain of others, or to reproach himself. Indeed throughout, he seemed to me pleased and gratified with the conduct of his colleagues both about men and measures.

There were indeed two votes during the Session, of which he did not cordially approve — the income tax, and the additional allowance to the Royal brothers. "I suppose," (said he, of the first) "it is necessary, for those who are most conversant with financial matters tell me so, and no man, I think, would like to propose it unless he thought so." To the additional income of the Princes, he found the Government pledged, and he observed that he could hardly withhold or obstruct a favour to the younger Princes, who had supported his Opposition, and were now supporting his Ministry, which his predecessor, Mr. Pitt, had promised them, when arrayed against him, to grant. Indeed, his objection was not to the allowance, but to the fund from which it was to be derived. The King's Civil List

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ought, he thought, to have defrayed it. Since I have spoken of the concurrence of opinion on most subjects, both of principle and detail, between him and his colleagues during his life, I owe it to those who survived, and to myself to add, that with the exception of one, I knew of no measure adopted subsequently by Lord Grenville's administration, to which, from my knowledge of his principles and feelings, I think he would have been averse. To the dissolution of Parliament, I think he would have been. The motives which induced Lord Grenville's Cabinet to adopt it will be mentioned hereafter; and it must be acknowledged, that the *ratio suasoria* for it became stronger after the event which deprived the Government of its chief assistance in the House of Commons. On all publick matters he had more repugnance, during the latter part of his illness, to talk, than his colleagues had reluctance to consult him. The truth is, that they sought every opportunity of doing so, and I never observed the least indifference to his opinion, even when he was quite disabled from en-

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forcing it; or the slightest neglect of any advice he gave, much less of any request which he was disposed to make.

Numbers of letters were written from every quarter of the kingdom to suggest the means of preserving his life. The warmth and eagerness with which they were urged, expressive of the publick interest taken in his recovery, were gratifying in the extreme. One remedy, an exterior application of snails and (I think) colewort to the belly, was, with the permission of the physicians, tried for a day or two. At first, it seemed to relieve him, but its effects soon subsided, and the unfavourable symptoms recurred and increased. His pulse and stomach would no longer bear much mercury. On the other hand, the state and distension of his skin were such, as to deter the physicians from allowing it to be rubbed in, a mode of applying it for which Mr. Fox had some predilection. At length the water had accumulated so much, that the operation of tapping became necessary. I was requested to apprise him

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that, though neither painful nor dangerous, it could only be rendered useful by keeping both his body and mind in a state of the greatest tranquillity for two or three days afterwards. If therefore he had any subject on which he felt anxious, or any directions to give in case his complaint should take a more unfavourable turn, it would be prudent to mention every such circumstance before the operation. He had, at an earlier stage of his illness, exacted from me a promise to apprise him of any approach of danger, and added with emotion, "We are neither of us children, and it would be ridiculous to conceal anything:" he then resumed his gaiety, and added, "I don't mean to die though, young one; and above all not to give the thing up, as my father did."

It was, I believe, at that period that he spoke to me about the *Fox-Glove*. He expressed a strong repugnance to it, but added emphatically, "I do not mean, however, that I will not take *that* too, rather than leave anything untried; but I prefer some of these quack medicines, and if it

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once comes to the Fox-Glove, I shall think very ill of it indeed." He never took it. When in one of our most despondent moments, it was suggested, Dr. Vaughan said, "It would be of no service; it ought not even to be tried in this case." This opinion probably arose from the intermission of the pulse, which the physicians had observed with some dismay, on administering drastick medicines in an early stage of the complaint. I wrote down, in 1811, my recollection of Mr. Fox's own injunctions and wishes on the subject of the Fox-Glove, and they prove that Mr. Trotter, his secretary, in his insinuations against the family and the physicians for allowing medicines too strong to be administered, was as unwarranted in his conjectures on Mr. Fox's own notions and wishes, as he has been shown by a letter of Dr. Moseley to be incorrect in his supposition of facts.

To return to my narrative: I told him about an hour before the first operation was performed, that there was neither pain nor immediate danger to be appre-

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hended, but that great quiet of mind and body was deemed necessary to give the operation all its beneficial consequences; that the efforts of the constitution to support the frame after a large portion of water was suddenly drawn off, required the very utmost repose; and that any exertion, mental or bodily, soon afterwards, would impede the endeavour of the constitution to resume its tone. He understood me. He gave me directions where to find his Will. The situation and feelings of Mrs. Fox seemed to be the chief, and indeed the only, occupation of his mind on that occasion, and on every other where he spoke of the probability of his disease terminating fatally. He could speak of nothing regarding her without strong and sensible emotion. He contrived, however, to explain his wishes and expectations about a provision for her after his death. They were as nearly fulfilled as the state of the pension laws would admit. He had hardly finished what he had to say on that painful subject, when he abruptly said, "Now change the conversation, or read me the 8th Book of

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Virgil." I did so. He made me read the finest verses twice over, spoke of their merits, and compared them with passages in other poets, with all his usual acuteness, taste, memory, and vivacity. He had no desire that I should be present at the puncture, and I declined it from a dislike to the sight of any operation. It was hardly over, however, when he called me into the room, and telling me that it was right, and might some day or other be useful to me to know what the operation of tapping was, he sat looking at the water as it spouted from him, and with good humour, and even pleasantry, commented on the figure he made.

For some few days he seemed to revive. With the propensity to deceive ourselves, which seems to haunt a sick room, we began to entertain some faint hopes that the medicines and treatment might ward off the necessity of a second operation. In this interval, he took, if I mistake not, one or two airings; and in a few days he was removed to Chiswick. The weather was fine, and the garden through which he was

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wheeled, and the pictures, and large apartments of that magnificent villa, seemed to refresh his spirits. A remark of Bacon quoted in the Spectator, that poetry, sculpture, painting, and all the arts of imitation, relieve and soothe the mind in sickness, while other occupations fatigue and harass it, struck him exceedingly. He applied it, no doubt, to his own situation, and after some reflection, he observed, that he could not see the reason, but acknowledged the truth of it. He found the employment of the mind in the contemplation of a landscape, or the perusal of a poem, refreshing; and all other exertion in business, private or publick, irksome.

It was not long ere he was tapped a second time. In the morning of the 7th of September, he grew much worse, and Mrs. Fox sent for me over to Chiswick, which I did not quit till after the termination of his illness. One day he sent for me, and reminded me of my promise, not to conceal the truth. I told him that we had been much alarmed, but that he was better. I

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added, however, that he was in a very precarious state, and that I must acknowledge his danger, though I perhaps over-stated it from a fear of allowing myself to deceive him after the promise I had given. He then repeated the injunctions he had given me before, and said once or twice, "You have done quite right—you will not forget poor Liz: what will become of her!" As he had now been twice apprised of his danger, and seemed to me to have said all that he wished, I henceforth endeavoured to encourage his hopes as much as I could, and infinitely beyond my own judgment of his situation. He was, however, somewhat stronger and easier that night; he conversed more than he had done for some time: seeing his servant in the room, he spoke to me in French, and his thoughts still dwelt exclusively on Mrs. Fox. "Je crains pour elle," said he; "a't'elle la moindre idée de mon danger? si non, quelle souffrance pour elle!" I answered him (what was indeed the truth) that she was sufficiently aware of his danger to prevent the worse termination of

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his illness being a surprise; but that she had not been so desponding that morning as my sister, General Fitz Patrick, and others; and I ventured to add, "et à cette heure vous voyez qu'elle avait raison; for in spite of what I then said to you, 'dabit Deus his quoque finem.'" "Aye," said he, with a faint smile, "but *finem*, young one, may have two senses."

Such was our last conversation. He spoke, indeed, frequently in the course of the next thirty-six hours, and he evidently retained his faculties unimpaired; but he was too restless at one time, and too lethargick at others, to keep up any conversation after that evening, which I think was the 11th of September. About this period of his illness, Mrs. Fox, who had a strong sense of religion, consulted some of us on the means of persuading Mr. Fox to hear prayers read by his bedside. I own that I had some apprehensions lest any clergyman called in might think it a good opportunity for displaying his religious zeal, and acquiring celebrity by some exhibition to

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which Mr. Fox's principles and taste would have been equally averse. When, however, Mr. Bouverie, a young man of excellent character, without pretension or hypocrisy, was in the house, I seconded her request, in the full persuasion that by so doing I promoted what would have been the wishes of Mr. Fox himself. His chief object throughout was to soothe and satisfy her. Yet repugnance was felt, and to some degree urged, even to this, by Mr. Trotter, who soon afterwards thought fit to describe with great fervour the devotion it inspired, and to build upon it many conjectures of his own on the religious tenets and principles of Mr. Fox. Mr. Bouverie stood behind the curtain of the bed, and in a faint but audible voice read the service. Mr. Fox remained unusually quiet. Towards the end, Mrs. Fox knelt on the bed and joined his hands, which he seemed faintly to close with a smile of ineffable goodness, such as can never be forgotten by those who witnessed it. Whatever it betokened, it was a smile of serenity and

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goodness, such as could have proceeded at that moment only from a disinterested and benevolent heart, from a being loving and beloved by all that surrounded and by all that approached him. From that period, and not till that period, Mrs. Fox bore her situation and apprehensions with some fortitude; and I have no doubt that her confidence in religion alone enabled her to bear the scene which she was doomed so soon to undergo.

During the whole of the 13th of September, no hopes could be entertained. For the last two hours of his existence his articulation was so painful and indistinct, that we could only occasionally catch his words, and then very few at a time. The small room in which he lay has two doors, one into the large saloon, the other into a room equally small adjoining. In the latter Mrs. Fox, during the last ten days, constantly sat or lay down without undressing. Her bed was within hearing, and indeed within a very few feet, of that of Mr. Fox. The doors were always open, for

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the weather was extremely hot. Of those who had access to him during the last melancholy days, it was at any one moment a mere accident who were actually in the bedchamber with him, who were pacing the adjoining rooms, or giving vent to their grief in the distant corners of the apartments. Each was actually by his bedside during some part of the day, and all, of at least seven or eight* persons, were constantly within call of the room in which he lay or in attendance upon him. The impression, therefore given, (whether intentionally or not, I cannot say) with respect to the persons present at his death, in Mr. Trotter's book is quite incorrect. The last words which he uttered with any distinct-

* Mrs. Fox, Miss Fox, Miss Willoughby, Lady Holland, General Fitz Patrick, Mr. Hawkins, Mr. Trotter, Dr. Moseley, or one of the other physicians, and often all three, and myself: other intimate friends, such as Lord Robert Spencer, Lord John Townshend, Lord Fitzwilliam, frequently called. Some, I think, approached his bedside, all were admitted and staid in the adjoining apartments for a considerable space of time.

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ness were, "I die happy;" and "Liz," the affectionate abbreviation in which he usually addressed his wife. He attempted indeed to articulate something more, but we none of us could accurately distinguish the sounds. In very few minutes after this fruitless endeavour to speak, in the evening of the 13th of September, 1806, he expired without a groan, and with a serene and placid countenance, which seemed even after death to represent the benevolent spirit which had animated it.

With some pain to myself, and with some hazard of wearying those who may at any distance of time peruse these Papers, I have thus related all the minute particulars concerning the last illness and death of the best and greatest man of our time, with whom the accident of birth closely connected me, from whose conversation and kindness I derived the chief delight of my youth, and veneration for whose memory furnished me with the strongest motive for continuing in publick life, as well as the best regulation for my conduct therein. I noted down these

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details, *currente calamo*, without stopping to select a word, or polish an expression, in the year 1811, five years and a few weeks after the period of his death. I did so because I was then fresh from the perusal of a book written by his secretary, Mr. Trotter, in which the author, possibly without any evil intention, conveys very false impressions of the opinions of Mr. Fox, and still more so of the conduct of his relations and friends. If a consciousness of being beloved and almost adored by all who approached him could administer consolation in the hour of death, no man could with more reason or propriety have closed his career with the exclamation of—"I die happy;" for no man ever deserved or obtained that consolation more certainly than Mr. Fox.

His character could be best delineated by a narrative of the leading events of his publick life, by a reference to his speeches and writings, by a publication of many of his private letters, a description of his domestick life, and such fragments of his

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conversation as the memory of his friends might supply. Such a work I have long meditated.* If I have leisure and health, I trust that I shall, some day, accomplish it in a way, I will not say worthy of the subject (for to that I do not aspire), but, at least, in a manner which shall do him no discredit, which shall offend against no one principle which I have imbibed from him, and which shall give no unnecessary pain to any one, and, above all, none to such as command my regard and affection, by having shared some portion of his.

END OF SECOND BOOK.

N.B. — This book was finished, and the last half written, on the 11th November, 1811. I have transcribed it from the original green morocco book in this

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* My father abandoned this work at a later period of his life. The late Mr. Allen commenced it, but also gave it up. The ample materials left by my father are now in Lord John Russell's hands for that purpose.—*Holland.*

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spring of 1824, and in so doing have only corrected the style and language, and neither added to nor suppressed the facts (trifling or important) related in the narrative, at least in that part of it which regards Mr. Fox.

In July, 1826, I showed this narrative of the last months of Mr. Fox's life to Lord Robert Spencer, one of his most intimate and early friends (few others, alas, now survive), and he confirmed the correctness of my recollection in most particulars.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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